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MID-TERM ASSESSMENT OF THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REGIONAL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT (CARPE)

Final Report

February 17, 2006

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USAID
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFLEGT	African Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade
AFR	Africa Bureau (USAID)
AWF	African Wildlife Foundation
BSP	Biodiversity Support Program
CAR	Central African Republic
CARPE	Central African Regional Program for the Environment
CAWHFI	Central African World Heritage Forest Initiative
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBFP	Congo Basin Forest Partnership
CBNRM	Community-Based Natural Resources Management
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CEFDHAC	Conference sur les Ecosystemes de Forêts Denses et Humides d’Afrique Centrale
CEFRECOF	Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Conservation Forestiere
CI	Conservation International
CIB	Congolais Industrielle du Bois
CIFOR	Center for International Forestry Research
CIRAD	Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le Développement
CITIES	Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species
Co-Co-Si	Comite pour Coordination du Site
COMIFAC	Commission on the Forests of Central Africa
CTFS	Center for Tropical Forest Science
CTO	Cognizant Technical Officer
DFID	Department for International Development
DFGHI	Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DROC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECOFAC	Conservation and Rational Use of Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa Program
ENRA	Enzyme Refiner’s Association
ERAIFT	Ecole régionale post-universitaire d'aménagement et de gestion intégrée des forêts tropicales
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FFP	Food for Peace
FORCOMS	Forest Concession monitoring systems
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FSN	Foreign Service National
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GFW	Global Forest Watch
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GPS	Global Positioning System
GTZ	Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
ICCN	Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature
IRM	Innovative Resources Management
IMAP	Information Management and Analysis Project
ITTO	International Tropical Timber Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LWA	Leader with Associates
LS	Landscape
MIKE	Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants
MINFOF	Ministry of Forestry
MOV	Means of Verification
NASA/UMD	National Aeronautics and Space Administration/University of Maryland
NESDA	Network for the Environment and Sustainable Development
NPS	National Park Service
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRM	Natural Resources Management
OCAT	Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool
OES	International Environment, and Scientific Affairs
OSFAC	Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale

PA	Protected Areas
PASA	Participating Agency Service Agreement
PMP	Performance Monitoring Plan
RAPAC	Réseau des Aires Protégées d'Afrique Centrale
RCO	Regional contract officer
REBAC	Central African Botanist Network
REFADD	Network of African Women in Sustainable Development
REIMP	Regional Environmental Information Management Program
FRA	Request for Applications
ROC	Republic of Congo
RLA	Regional legal advisor
RSSA	Resources Support Service Agreement
SD	Office of Sustainable Development (Africa Bureau)
SI/MBG	Smithsonian Institution/Missouri Botanical Garden
SOF	State of the Forest Report
TCCB	Tayna Center for Conservation of Biology
TRIDOM	The Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri-National
UGADEC	Union of Associations for the Conservation of Gorillas and Community Development of the Eastern DRC
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	US Forest Service
USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
USG	United States Government
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WRI	World Resources Institute
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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Acknowledgements

In preparation for this assessment and prior to traveling to Africa, the assessment team received a great deal of background material, excellent timely guidance, and assistance in setting up valuable meetings with the CARPE partners from the CARPE CTO, John Flynn and from the CARPE liaison officer in USAID/Washington, Karen O'Donnell. During our travels in Central Africa, John Flynn and his CARPE SO team (especially Nico Tchamou and Jackie Doremus) helped immeasurably with travel preparations (and several travel revisions), as well as providing excellent oral briefings and other additional program materials and documentation. Our Administrative Assistant, Jackie Mapango did an excellent job in setting up the team's meetings in Kinshasa and in assisting with our local logistics requirements. In Gabon, Brigitte Carr-Dirick, WWF/Gabon Director, was well organized and wonderfully flexible in preparing our Libreville schedule, working with Matthew Cassetta, the US Embassy's Environment "Hub" for Central and West Africa. Bas Huijbregts, WWF's Landscape leader for Gamba-Conkouati, prepared our schedule and organized briefings during our visit to the Gamba portion of the landscape in Gabon. Meetings in Goma DRC and the team's initial travel itinerary to Kahuzi-Beiga were organized by Patrick Mehlman, Dian Fosse Gorilla Fund program director. Unfortunately, due to heavy rains, those travel plans had to be cancelled. John Flynn and WCS/Ituri landscape leader, Jean-Remy Makana quickly organized an alternative travel schedule to the Ituri landscape and Beni, where WCS Country Director, Richard Tshombe, worked closely with Floribert Bujo and the field team to ensure excellent logistics and a comprehensive visit. Meanwhile, the team leader's briefings and his review of the Virunga landscape program, including travel in Rwanda and DRC, was very well organized by Moses Kanene, AWF's Program Manager for CARPE.

The team also wishes to acknowledge the full support received from each of the CARPE partners, whose program leaders made themselves and their program staff available to meet our scheduling requirements throughout this assessment.

Finally, the team would like to acknowledge the excellent backstop support provided from the beginning of this assessment in October, 2005 through February, 2006 by Weidemann Associates, especially task manager, Veronica Letelier, and administrative assistant, Nicole Driscoll.

Purpose of Assessment and Methodology

CARPE II was authorized in 2003 for a 7-year period. After three years of implementation, the CARPE SO team felt that it was necessary to check the validity of the strategic approach based on expected and actual results at this mid-term point. The assessment was requested to look at three levels: **performance of the program** elements toward achieving their results; **the management structure** and how this is affecting the program performance; and the **overall strategic design** and how well it is moving the program to results that will ensure the long-term conservation of the natural resources in the Congo. These areas needed to be analyzed to determine if specific changes were needed in the program that would improve its effectiveness and help ensure that strategic objectives of CARPE are achieved. The following questions were asked:

- Is the program advancing on track, so that CARPE will reach its goals for Phase I by 2011, and for the overall program by 2015?
- Is CARPE design sufficient to ensure that the results and impacts achieved will be maintained beyond the LOP of CARPE?
- What are the priorities for maintaining and changing approaches of management and/or programming to ensure that CARPE is on track and that it stays on track?

USAID planned to use the answers to these questions to guide the mid-term decisions concerning program content, funding and management, in accordance with the obligation of FY 2006 funds and beyond. The timing of this assessment is made more salient because 2005 marks the end of the United States Government's commitment to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP). An assessment at this time was seen as necessary to determine the results of the US effort in its participation in the CBFP via the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), and to help CARPE strategize for the post-commitment era. One of the central questions for USAID and its partners is how CARPE and the CBFP integration should precede beyond the FY 2005 obligations, so as to most effectively achieve their two similar goals.

A four person assessment team was fielded in early October 2005 by Weidemann Associates in response to a RAISE PLUS IQC task order. The three US based members of the team initiated their work by reading key documents provided by the CARPE SO team. The team prepared a list of key assessment questions prior to initiating interviews with key actors. The team then conducted interviews with representatives of each of the US-based CARPE partners. The team felt that these 2-4 hour meetings were not sufficiently long to allow for a fully comprehensive understanding of the partners' views. Therefore, a questionnaire, with the team's key assessment questions, was prepared and e-mailed to each partner organization. Responses to the questionnaire, requested to be anonymous, were received from all but two CARPE partners.

The US based members traveled to Kinshasa on October 29, 2005 where they were joined by the fourth team member, who served as a local area specialist. The team spent three weeks in Central Africa, conducting interviews and site visits. The team spent one week in Kinshasa, a second week in Gabon with meetings in Libreville and site visits and interviews in the Gamba landscape. During the third week the team flew from Kinshasa to Goma and divided, in order to maximize their resources and time. The team leader focused on the Virunga landscape with travel to Rwanda (Kigali, Ruengheri, Volcanoes National Park), as well to the southern region of the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The other team members flew to Epulu, DRC, to assess progress in the Ituri landscape and then visited Beni where they met with commercial loggers and CARPE partners. The team then returned to Kinshasa where they presented a draft set of conclusions and recommendations to the CARPE SO team, the USAID/Kinshasa mission director and to other mission officers.

The US based members returned to Washington, where after a few additional interviews with partners, a draft report was prepared during early December. This draft was submitted to the CARPE SO team leader in early January, 2006. After receipt of his comments, an edited draft report was sent to CARPE partners for their comments and suggestions. Taking these comments into consideration, a final report was prepared in February and submitted to USAID. In addition, the assessment team leader coordinated the preparation of public presentation materials (Power point and written summary) that were presented to the US based partners in late February, and a separate memorandum was presented to the SO team leader on future procurement recommendations.

Executive Summary

CARPE (Central African Regional Program for the Environment) is USAID's major conservation program in Central Africa and is one of USAID's largest field based conservation programs. Central Africa contains the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, representing nearly 20% of the world's remaining biome of this type. These forests are under significant threat. Most countries in the region remain fragile, many having suffered from war with large displacements of their populations. However the governments of the Congo Basin have recognized the threat to their forests. By signing the Yaounde Declaration in 1999, the region's presidents created a framework and action plan to achieve shared forest conservation objectives.

USAID began CARPE as a 20 year program in 1995. The current phase of the initiative, CARPE II, began in January, 2003, and will operate until September, 2011. CARPE II is carried on in nine countries with the strategic objective of reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management. The design of CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), an international agreement between governments, NGOs and the private sector reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), with the leadership of US Secretary of State, Colin Powell and the Government of South Africa. The United States Government (USG) commitment to the CBFP was to support forest conservation in eleven large landscapes in the region.

The USG chose to use the CARPE II as the program umbrella for most of the activities that it would finance as part of the CBFP, with a commitment to provide \$53 million over three years (FYs 2002 to 2005). An Interagency Advisory Board was established in Washington to provide advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities. CARPE also works in the Virunga landscape that includes territory in Rwanda and Uganda, that are not CBFP signatories. Approximately \$15 million/year was planned for the total CARPE program, with \$12 million dedicated to the landscape program (all but the previous CARPE I funding level of \$3 million/year). Only activities in support of conservation of the 11 CBFP landscapes were to be considered for funding that drew on the \$12 million per year. USAID management costs, cross-cutting non-CBFP activities and Virunga landscape funding all had to be funded from the original \$3 million, and USAID management costs were capped at \$1 million/year.

In order to move quickly into an implementation phase, USAID issued Requests for Assistance for work across the landscapes. They were issued to each of the four non-government organizations (Implementing NGOs) that had initiated the concept of the CBFP, that had major programs in the region and that had pre-competed Leader with Associate (LWA) cooperative agreements with USAID. The implementing NGOs divided up the landscapes and agreed on partnering arrangements within the landscapes. USAID accepted this division of responsibilities. USAID also negotiated PASA agreements¹ with six USG federal agencies and with two other organizations to provide various complementary "cross-cutting" services to the CARPE program, on demand. CARPE agreements with the Implementing NGOs require "substantial" matching funds from the landscape leaders amounting in aggregate to more than 50% of the USAID contribution.

CARPE II has been operational for almost three years; and the USG funding commitment to the CBFP has been met. The CARPE SO team felt at this mid-term point that it was necessary to check the validity of the strategic approach, based on expected and actual results, and to use the answers to these questions to guide mid-term decisions concerning program content, funding and management in accordance with the obligation of FY 2006 funds and beyond. Thus, a four person team was fielded in October, 2005 by Weidemann

¹ Participating Agency Service Agreements (PASAs) are agreements that transfer funds and services between US federal agencies.

Associates to provide an independent assessment of CARPE II. This assessment has addressed three major issues: **performance of the program** elements toward achieving their results; **the management structure** and how this is affecting the program performance; and the **overall strategic design** and how well it is moving the program to results that will ensure long-term natural resource conservation in the Congo.

CARPE Program Performance to Date:

CARPE has three Intermediate Results (IRs):

- IR 1: Natural resources managed sustainably;
- IR 2: Natural resources governance (institutions, policies, laws) strengthened;
- IR 3: Natural resources monitoring institutionalized.

Landscape activities (IR 1): The vast majority of program resources (approximately 80%) have been dedicated to achievement of IR 1 landscape objectives. Although most field activities have been operational for less than three years, with appropriate adjustments, CARPE II is and should stay on track to achieve its goals of reducing the rate of forest degradation and protecting biodiversity by 2015. The move from Phase I to Phase II successfully built on limited CARPE I and on other NGO programs, to leverage the established advantages of the implementing NGOs. Much of the progress to date has been focused on protected areas, especially national parks, within landscapes, where implementing NGOs have the most experience.

In most of the landscapes there has been significant progress made in regard to biological and socio-economic surveys and in regard to the initial zoning of landscape units, especially within protected areas; the program is on track towards meeting indicator targets to create baselines and to convene the land use planning process by September 2006. Implementing NGOs also work closely with government agencies charged with protected area conservation and management and have built the capacity of these agencies' personnel. However, the implementing NGOs have limited relationships with government agencies that have the legal authority to work in the landscape areas that are not protected areas (PAs), such as forest concessions. Progress in working with forest concessions and in establishing community based natural resource management (CBNRM) reserves is limited. The variety of conservation strategies being used to address threat-based challenges is field-testing a wide range of innovative models. These models push the limits of implementing recent enabling legislation and, with continued refinement, are on track to provide a sound basis for conservation management. Little progress has been made in addressing conservation threats, such as bushmeat hunting, that occur in non-protected and non-concession forests.

Factors that have the greatest influence on the achievement of goals at the landscape level include: a long-term NGO presence, previous investments in infrastructure and local partner capacity, an existing information base for planning/management, NGOs' success at leveraging additional funding, and commitment by the lead NGOs to convening the land use planning process. The main constraints to progress at the landscape scale include: remoteness, difficult access to the sites, lack of an information base for planning/management, lack of infrastructure, lack of agreements in place to work with government agencies mandated to manage lands outside of PAs, low tourism potential, and low local partner capacity. In several landscapes, insecurity makes access impossible or dangerous in parts of the landscape.

Landscape partners or teams in perhaps half of the landscapes have not worked well together to achieve landscape-wide objectives. This is attributed to competitiveness between the partners, poor management skills or lack of interest in management by landscapes leaders, and USAID's practice of segmenting landscape funding, rather than channeling all funds through the landscape lead organization. The extent of the authority of landscape leaders is not clearly defined. The partnerships that were most effective were those where the respective capacities of the NGOs were the determining factor in assigning functions and

responsibilities. At sites where long-term collaboration was already ongoing, the appropriate roles were clear. At newer sites, some partnerships were formed without a good mutual understanding of comparative strengths as the basis for organizations' roles. Collaboration across the program's landscapes is also less than desirable. Although many useful models are being built, there has been insufficient progress in exchanging and replicating models or in sharing information, ideas and lessons learned across landscapes.

Cross-cutting activities and objectives (IR2 and IR3):

Four major cross-cutting issues that have the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results and which are within the comparative advantage of CARPE partners are: a) Capacity Building, b) Policy and Governance; c) Bushmeat, d) Remote Sensing Technology. Very limited funding was provided to address these objectives; the funding was dispersed across a confusing array of USG and NGO organizations whose efforts were unevenly implemented in scope, scale, and geographic focus. The roles of the federal agencies are not clearly understood by the partners as a whole. The "market approach" with Implementing NGOs encouraged to buy their services has failed. Only the US Forest Service (USFS), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration/University of Maryland (NASA/UMD), World Resources Institute/Global Forest Watch (WRI/GFW) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have a proven track record that is likely to lead to a continuing demand for their presence in CARPE.

Capacity Building: The mix of NGOs and federal agency service providers has not effectively addressed the capacity building objective. NGOs have strengthened park management and surveillance capacity, but impact on Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and local NGOs has been much less effective. Federal agency capacity-building efforts have been too sporadic (lacking continued follow-up), and too limited in scope to have made broad program impact.

Policy: One major success of the CBFP has been to stimulate donor participation in forestry and conservation policies. The Commission on the Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC) *Plan de Convergence* provides a vehicle for encouraging the countries of the region to come together on policy issues. At the national level (and sometimes at the Basin level), several major policy issues have been identified and most are being addressed by donors. CARPE partners appear to be influencing national policies by taking the lead in: a) establishing community management reserves and concession agreements and (b) developing landscape tourism plans.

Bushmeat: CARPE participation in the Bushmeat Task Force underscores the need to integrate bushmeat strategies with other programs such as poverty reduction, livelihoods, mining, and health. Much of CARPE's focus to date has been on monitoring the severity of the bushmeat problem. CARPE natural resources management (NRM) activities outside of protected areas (forest and oil concession enforcement, local control) show promise for reducing small scale bushmeat hunting.

Remote Sensing Technology: The natural resources monitoring supported by NASA/UMD, despite remaining gaps, is providing objective assessments on the status of forest cover. This work is valued, not just for the quality of the data provided, but also for its political neutrality. Monitoring will continue to require CARPE resources and greater availability of funds could accelerate the establishment of necessary baselines across the landscapes. COMIFAC demands and the related State of the Forest monitoring will require increasingly precise information that can be systematically collected at the field level using comparable methodologies.

Progress in meeting USG objectives for the CBFP: The CBFP has been extraordinarily successful in bringing the conservation needs of the Congo Basin to a broader audience and in increasing donor funding (\$150 million). Active French "mediation" of the CBFP and COMIFAC should continue to be welcomed and supported by CARPE and by the USG.

CARPE Management Structure

CARPE's management structure, operating in 9 countries, 11 landscapes and 15 landscape segments, and having 12 principal partners, is under-funded and over-performing. Transfer of CARPE management responsibilities to the field has effectively and appropriately focused USAID's attention on the field. The cognizant technical officer (CTO) has been extremely active and available to all parties, but has been hampered by a small fluctuating staff and with problems relating to CARPE's field-based focal points. Despite the presence of the CARPE office in Kinshasa, the overall USG presence and attention to environmental issues in the region have been insufficient, with very limited US Embassy capacity.

Program roles and responsibilities are clearly established with the major exception of national governments and landscape leaders (see above). Host government expectations of involvement have not been met; even when they have accepted that no CARPE funding will be provided directly to them. Indirect support provided via partners has not been well documented or acknowledged by governments. CARPE's annual planning process essentially ignores national governments, although it typically involves locally-based government officials in the landscapes.

The most significant problems in agreement execution relate to: a) long delays in the approvals of sub-contracts and sub-grants during periods of short staffing in the regional contract officer's headquarters RCO/Nairobi; b) absence of Regional Legal Advisor support and c) continuing revisions in work plans and in the performance monitoring plan (PMP) reporting requirements. The degree of USAID's substantial involvement as defined in the cooperative agreements appears to be normal, but has been exercised aggressively by requiring great detail in the work plan and in the monitoring requirements. Most partners have accepted or have seen value in USAID's insistence on planning and monitoring at this level of detail.

The structure of the cooperative agreement awards encourages a strong landscape focus. Budgeting and monitoring by landscape segment has put a very heavy load on the CARPE SO team, with the team involved with annual budget decisions on landscape segments that would be described elsewhere as mini-projects (funding as low as \$150,000/year).

CARPE Assessment of Strategic Design

Essentially, CARPE II has three major design elements:

1. Grants to large international conservation NGOs (Implementing NGOs), leveraging their country and regional presence to implement field "landscape" level activities;
2. A set of mostly US-based organizations that work across landscapes in common thematic areas such as multiple-use planning, forest monitoring, policy and governance and uncontrolled hunting;
3. A regional program management structure based in USAID Kinshasa, with country-specific focal points as program antennae and with modest backstop and coordination functions in Washington.

The rapid scale up and five-fold increase in CARPE funding led to a number of the following design compromises:

- Too strong of a linking of funds to geographic areas, without adequately linking them to existing governance regimes.
- Insufficient USAID management structure for the scope of the undertaking.
- A design that did not facilitate important cross-cutting, transversal functions such as monitoring, policy coordination, and determining best practices that were dispersed across a confusing array of USG and NGO organizations.

- Disproportionate support to one of three intermediate results (IR1) via a strong weighting of funding and through emphasis on local, mostly protected area-level implementation and capacity building.

The lack of a USAID presence has been insufficiently bolstered by other CARPE/CBFP resources such as the State Department Regional Environment Officer, the focal points and Washington based partners. However, where it has received adequate attention, the basic design for working in non-presence countries appears sound. CARPE needs to increase resources to cross-landscape, system-wide, and regional concerns, especially as other donor funds become more available at the field level and within landscapes.

The “landscape” approach has succeeded as a concept by shifting attention from a nearly exclusive focus on parks (and protected areas), but it has built limited local buy-in. In spatial terms, landscapes are project units and do not correspond to existing administrative planning units. Landscape leaders and partners need to develop suitable mandates and links with institutions beyond the parks and forest departments to appropriately support local governance. This can be done by balancing landscape with other elements of a conservation program.

Major Recommendations for the remainder of CARPE II:

The report sets forward six major programmatic recommendations and then provides additional recommendations for the resolution of significant CARPE II issues. In some cases several program options are presented in order to encourage further discussion and more in-depth analysis by USAID and by the partners, since the assessment team was not able to review in depth all of the elements of this complex program. It is anticipated that these recommendations will prove useful to the team that will soon assist the CARPE CTO team in designing the next phase of the CARPE II program. Finally, no specific procurement-sensitive recommendations are included in this document, due to USAID regulations.

Programmatic Recommendations:

- Improve program balance by focusing more attention and resources on IRs 2 and 3 and on program management. With the experience of the past three years, funding can be allocated much more efficiently than by using the artificial proportional limitations established when CARPE II was initiated.
- Strive to link landscape programs more closely to existing governance structures and to increase host country participation in program decision making. The weakness of host government and even local citizen support for the landscape programs is CARPE II’s “achilles heel” that needs to be addressed.
- Diversify the skill base of CARPE partners working in landscapes to ensure that livelihood needs, as well as conservation threats, are addressed in a way that builds a local constituency for conservation. The teaming agreements for the landscapes need to provide a greater diversity of talents during the remainder of CARPE II.
- Gradually focus less attention on protected areas (PAs) in landscapes, and focus increased attention on addressing threats and opportunities in forest concessions and with communities. Placing priority attention on PAs was an appropriate strategy for the initial phase of CARPE II, but cannot remain the center of attention in the next phase, if CARPE’s landscape goals are to be attained.
- Reinvigorate the USG financial commitment to CBFP and back that commitment with increased staff attention to basin-wide and national policy issues. The USG should continue to provide leadership for this program by announcing a continued USG commitment to CBFP of at least \$15 million/year through 2015. Just as importantly, the State Department and USAID can build on the initial success of the CBFP with some modest increases in staffing and with active involvement in key policy issues.
- Increase emphasis on country-level and basin-wide coordination (country teams, prioritization of non-landscape activities), while at the same time reducing the isolation of landscape programs and

improving opportunities for intra-landscape learning from successful models. A new CARPE support contract is recommended to sustain this effort.

Other Recommendations:

a. Tighten program focus: Focus CARPE activities on those programmatic or spatial landscape activities that will most directly reduce identified threats. Leverage recent CBFP partner contributions to selectively and efficiently limit unnecessary use of USAID funds. Limit “cross-cutting” federal agency involvement in the follow-on design to areas where they have a demonstrated comparative advantage.

b. Improve landscape performance: Continue to use and promote a landscape approach, but place less emphasis on the concept of “landscapes” as territorial units. Landscape programs need to move beyond first-stage targets (largely protected areas) and should deal with broader and difficult landscape issues, including livelihoods issues. Adjust designs to explicitly account for inevitable variability in conditions of stability/security.

Continue working through Implementing NGOs as the primary means to anchor the CARPE program, but adjust grant mechanisms to encourage more synergistic consortia that better integrate strengths of a wider range of partners. Insist that, where appropriate, teaming arrangements include improving livelihoods, forestry, local governance and sometimes, conflict resolution or other specialized contractors/sub-grantees. Conservation NGOs should seek partners that can provide the needed expertise.

Allocation of landscape funds:

Option a: Normally, all landscape funding should be funneled through the landscape leader. To eliminate double overheads, implementing NGOs would need to accept that these funds would be subcontracted or sub-granted to other Implementing NGOs, with no or low overhead charges. Exceptions would be made on a case-by-case basis, primarily when Trans-boundary landscapes do not lend themselves to joint planning and when threats can be isolated and addressed without unnecessary administrative and management overhead.

Option b: Maintain the present system of unbundled funding for segment leads, but increase the formal authority of landscape leads to approve/disapprove annual plans and budgets.

c. Prioritize and make better use of Cross-Cutting program components. Four major cross-cutting issues that have the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results and which are within the comparative advantage of CARPE partners are: a) Capacity Building b) Policy and Governance c) Bushmeat, and d) Remote Sensing Technology for natural resource monitoring. Lead partners should be clearly identified for each of these issues in the next phase of CARPE procurement. The cross-cutting leads would be primarily responsible for recommending and sometimes executing CARPE-funded activities outside of landscapes, providing guidance but not funding within landscapes, and coordinating CARPE reporting. In each case, a CARPE II agenda (e.g. policy agenda, capacity building agenda) should be developed and clearly communicated to all CARPE partners. Recommendations for each of these four cross-cutting components are provided in Chapter 5.

CARPE should continue to support a small grant program in each country focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of NGOs and CBOs at both the national and landscape levels. Management of the small grants fund should be one of the tasks implemented through the proposed CARPE support contract.

d. Improve Program Management: Reduce and better distribute the Program’s management burden. The CARPE management burden is unusually heavy and the CARPE SO team’s capacity is limited and too dependent on one person. Bolster the USAID/CARPE staff in Kinshasa. Strive to reduce the number of management decisions that must be made by the CARPE SO team: e.g. approval of small grants, reduction in

the number of landscape segments. Establish a CARPE support contract (new mechanism) that will: support the CARPE country teams, increase capacity to manage the focal point and small grant programs, provide venues for country and regional exchange of lessons learned and successful models, coordinate non-landscape capacity building and policy activities, provide broad technical support to IRs 2 and 3, and perhaps assist the CARPE SO in program reporting. Make the Focal Points more effective elements of the USAID management team.

e. Continue program funding and reinvigorate USG support: Reinvigorate the USG's commitment and level of support to CBFP and CARPE objectives. Support to CBFP and CARPE is harmonious with broader USG and European goals of democratization and development in the region. Announce a continued USG commitment to CBFP through 2015. CARPE is an extraordinarily broad and ambitious program that could absorb much more than the funding presently available for it. A minimum of \$15 million/year (ideally more) will be needed through 2011 if CARPE is to have an opportunity to meet its Phase II objectives.

Increase USG staff and program support for the region. Establish a new International Environment, and Scientific Affairs (OES) position for Central Africa (only). Revitalize and broaden support for CBFP/CARPE by creating a new Washington-based coordination body that includes all CARPE partners and reaches out to other potential partners. Establish a more visible USG/USAID identification (branding) that will normally be used for CARPE-funded activities and commodities.

f. Improve CARPE's relationships with national governments, of which many do not appreciate CARPE and could limit its future success: For the remainder of CARPE II, a) establish a clearly defined role for local government officials in annual activity planning in landscapes and b) establish a clearly defined role for national government officials in approving an annual set of CARPE activities within each country. Make communication and coordination with national governments the primary task of re-invigorated Focal Points.

g. Develop a more precise approach to balancing conservation and development activities in landscapes: Possible options:

- Require landscape leaders in the Request for Applications (RFA) response to: a) analyze development needs in their landscape; b) identify development partners; and c) indicate a level of funding and a development approach needed to address the most critical needs and to alleviate threats to long-term conservation. A floor of 5% or 10% funding for development might be required by USAID.
- Announce the establishment of a second "development window" in the CBFP. Encourage donors to provide and implementing NGOs to search for development funding (matching funds or co-financing agreements with donors), to complement conservation funding in landscapes. This approach leaves development to the development specialists, and follows the approach of the World Wildlife Fund's (WWF's) partnering with the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) in Cameroon and the Central African Republic (CAR) and USAID/Kinshasa's funding for LacTumba.
- USAID/DRC and USAID/Rwanda, as well as the CARPE SO team leader should explore opportunities to access central and regionally-funded USAID programs (e.g. the Population-Health-Environment initiative; Office of Conflict Mitigation resources, FFP resources, Office of Energy resources), to supplement mission bilaterally-funded development activities in CARPE landscapes.
- Work closely with the Washington CARPE team to identify and help channel other resources to the CARPE (and CBFP) effort. For example, the USFWS has resources independent of those deriving from former CARPE monies that could be tapped by Congo Basin conservation entities.

I. Background and program history

Central Africa contains the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, representing nearly 20% of the world's remaining biome of this type. More than 60 million people live in the region, and they depend on their rich forests and on other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development. The Congo forests form the catchment of the Congo River, a basin of local, regional and global significance. The forests provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming. The forests also provide food, shelter and livelihoods for many of the region's people. Nearly half of the region targeted by CARPE is under forestry concessions, making productive forest use central to the region's economy. Deforestation trends and other threats to the forest are increasing in the region and, if unchecked, will ultimately negatively impact the development potential of the region.

Most countries in the region remain fragile, many having suffered from war and large displacements of their populations since the CARPE program began. However, the governments of the Congo Basin have recognized the threat to their forests and through the Yaounde Declaration, have indicated a desire to act. Several governments have begun to put appropriate legislative and policy frameworks in place, though implementation is lagging due to inadequately trained personnel and to other deficiencies in their capacity to implement these commitments. There is significant official recognition of the need for regional cooperation in tackling these environmental challenges, which has already led to cooperative work and to the formation of channels and structures for collaboration.

Recognizing the importance and difficulty of conservation in the Congo Basin, USAID began a 20 year program in 1995 aimed at reducing the threats of deforestation and the decrease in biodiversity. The current strategic phase of the initiative, CARPE II, began in January 2003 and will operate until September 11, 2011. CARPE II includes nine countries within the Congo Basin having the strategic objective of reducing the rate of forest degradation and the loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management. CARPE II is using the knowledge and capacity built under CARPE I to implement sustainable natural resource management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region and strengthen monitoring capacity.

An evaluation of CARPE in 2001 concluded: "In sum, CARPE and its partners have worked with great cost-efficiency to deliver a complex, flexible and imaginative contribution to forest conservation in the Congo Basin...the first Phase of CARPE has been an extremely worthwhile effort, benefiting greatly from the intellectual diversity of the many organizations, both in the U.S and in Central Africa that have worked together to execute its program." Although CARPE I was viewed as successful, the evaluation revealed several issues that needed to be considered in moving forward. In its initial phase, CARPE focused on two main issues, namely, building an information base regarding the region's natural resources and building local capacity through a small grants program. CARPE I divided its effort into themes that included forestry, protected areas, and environmental governance. The program suffered from the combination of its broad focus and its small, \$3 million/year budget. The evaluation recommended, *inter alia*, that CARPE program management be moved to the field in order to raise the program's profile and operational effectiveness. The evaluation also suggested that CARPE Phase II focus more on how land and resource uses could be zoned and regulated to support the conservation needs for forests and biodiversity. The evaluation praised the small grants program, because of its ability to involve local people and to build local capacity; it gave high marks to forest monitoring activities. Given the small budget anticipated for a follow-on CARPE II, the evaluation recommended that the program limit itself to a few landscapes where an integrated approach would be supported.

Unforeseen during the evaluation, the timing of the design and implementation of CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of an international agreement reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) where governments, NGOs and the private sector recognized the importance of conserving the Congo by creating the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership (CBFP). The essential background to the CBFP starts with the 1999 Yaounde Summit and the resulting Yaounde Declaration, where the region's heads of state created a framework and action plan (the *Plan de Convergence*) to achieve shared forest conservation goals. The Summit also endorsed the concept of conserving broad landscapes. The Commission on the Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC) was created to monitor and to coordinate actions of the member states relative to the Declaration, with a small secretariat based in Yaounde, Cameroon.

In 2000, a WWF-sponsored priority-setting workshop in Libreville involving more than 150 national and international specialists, determined the conservation principles for the Congo Basin that led to the definition of eleven landscapes as the priority targets for conservation in the Congo Basin. These eleven landscapes stretch across six Central African countries (DRC, Gabon, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sao Tome-Principe²), and encompass 36% of the Congo Basin territory. As a next step, several large international conservation NGOs (WWF, WCS, AWF and CI) proposed to the USG that it initiate at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) a major new program, named the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership, to stimulate international cooperation in the Congo Basin. They proposed that the USG also provide financial and political support for a major conservation program in these landscapes as the USG contribution to the CBFP. The USG agreed with this proposal and, in concert with the government of South Africa, Secretary of State Colin Powell announced the CBFP at the WSSD in 2002³. Priorities of the CBFP⁴ are to:

- Provide people sustainable means of livelihood through well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, and integrated ecotourism programs;
- Help countries develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas, and corridors; and,
- Improve forest and natural resource governance through community-based management, combating illegal logging, and enforcing anti-poaching laws.

The USG chose to use the CARPE II as the program umbrella for almost all of the activities that it would finance as part of the CBFP. The USG commitment to CBFP was to provide \$53 million over four years (FYs 2002 to 2005). An Interagency Advisory Board was established in Washington to provide advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities under CARPE. While CARPE landscapes encompass all of the CBFP areas, CARPE also works in one additional area, namely, in the Virunga landscape, that includes territory in Rwanda and Uganda.

While some components of CARPE I were extended for an extra year, USAID prepared to initiate the expanded CARPE II program. The program design focused primarily on the USG's commitment to conservation in the eleven landscapes, but the design team melded this element with the most successful components of CARPE I, and also fit the program closely to the Strategic Objective Framework used for CARPE I.

² Sao Tome-Principe is included in the CBFP although none of the eleven landscapes touch on its territory. Cross cutting activities may be carried out in that country.

³ Subsequently,

Secretary Powell traveled to Libreville, Gabon where the head of state, Omar Bongo, announced a commitment to establish thirteen new national parks and a national park service in support of the CBFP.

⁴ US State Department, Office of Environmental and Scientific Affairs, "Official Final CBFP Fact Sheet," 23 August 2002.

Revised for Performance Management Plan

CARPE II Results Framework

Reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity.

SO Indicators:

Ind 1: Change in area of forest from intact/pristine to “degraded,” modified, or secondary forest or to non-forest; and from “degraded” forest to non-forest

Ind 2: Population status for selected biodiversity “indicator” species such as: wide-ranging “landscape” species and/or ecological keystone species (e.g. elephants, large predators) and/or globally threatened species (such as, mountain gorillas, bonobos, etc.)

Intermediate
Results

Intermediate Result 1

Natural resources managed sustainably

LANDSCAPE SPECIFIC

Ind 1: Number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans
AWF, CI, WCS, WWF LS Leaders

Ind 2: Number of different use-zones (e.g., parks & PAs; CBNRM areas; forestry concessions; plantations) within landscapes with sustainable management plans
AWF, CI, WCS, WWF LS Leaders

Ind 3: Number of landscapes or other focal areas implementing surveillance system for illegal logging
AWF, CI, WCS, WWF LS Leaders

Ind 4: Number of landscapes or other focal areas implementing bushmeat surveillance system
AWF, CI, WCS, WWF LS Leaders

Intermediate Result 3

Natural resources monitoring institutionalized

MIXED – LS and COUNTRY

Ind 1: Number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments (see SO-level indicator 1)
UMD/NASA
AWF, CI, WCS, WWF LS Leaders

Ind 2: Assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions (e.g. government agencies, universities and research institutions) to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decisionmaking
CARPE FOCAL POINT: AWF, CI, WCS, WWF Country Heads
WRI IGP and GFW
IUCN

Ind 3: Content/quality analysis of annual “State of the Congo Basin Forest” report

Intermediate Result 2

Natural resources governance (institutions, policies, laws) strengthened

COUNTRY-SPECIFIC

Ind 1: Number of key new laws or policies for PAs, logging concessions, and CBNRM passed or old laws and policies reformed compared with a list of recommended or promoted reforms
CARPE FOCAL POINT: AWF, CI, WCS, WWF Country Heads
WRI IGP and GFW
IUCN

Ind 2: Number of NGO (and other civil society organizations) advocacy initiatives & activities (e.g., media articles about environmental governance issues e.g. illegal logging, bushmeat poaching; NR court cases brought or complaints filed with appropriate government agencies) recommended or promoted reforms
CARPE FOCAL POINT: AWF, CI, WCS, WWF Country Heads
WRI IGP and GFW
IUCN

Raise Plus Small Business Set Aside
The Weidmann Consortium 2006

Approximately \$15 million/year was assumed to be available for the total CARPE program, with \$12 million dedicated to the landscape program (all but the previous CARPE I funding level of \$3 million/year). Only activities that supported the conservation of the 11 CBFP landscapes were to be considered for funding that drew on the \$12m per year. USAID management costs, non-landscape activities carried out by federal agency partners and funding for the non-CBFP Virunga landscape all had to be funded from the original \$3 million.

In order to move quickly into an implementation phase, USAID decided to issue Requests for Assistance for work across the landscapes. The RFAs were issued to each of four founding international non-government organizations (Implementing NGOs) under Leader with Associates (LWA) agreements, which had been pre-competed and had already existed between USAID and each of the four. USAID asked for proposals that would differentiate each of the eleven landscapes and also 15 landscape segments. The proposals from each NGO should propose a “landscape leader” and a “partnering agreement” for work in the landscape that might include other Implementing NGOs or other organizations (e.g. CARE, local NGOs). Although the historical record becomes somewhat murky at this point, the Implementing NGOs met several times and negotiated among themselves a division of responsibilities for the package of landscapes. When USAID received and reviewed the four applications, they found that they had been presented with a single proposal for each landscape and for each landscape segment. USAID accepted this division of responsibilities, but found that none of the applications were fully satisfactory. USAID provided comments and questions to each of the NGOs and requested revised proposals. After some further negotiation, the revised proposals were accepted. The division of responsibility for the Implementing NGOs within the eleven landscapes and their estimated life-of-program funding is provided in three tables located in Annex I.

About the same time, USAID also negotiated PASA agreements⁵ with six USG federal agencies to provide various complementary “cross-cutting” services to the CARPE program, on demand: US Forest Service: *Multiple use planning at the landscape scale addressing community use, protected areas, and extractive zones* ; US Fish and Wildlife Service: *Bushmeat Initiative*; US National Park Service: *Technical assistance to Gabon in protected area management*; NASA⁶: *GIS and forest monitoring*; Smithsonian Institution: *Biological assessment capacity building*; and Peace Corps: *Local Natural Resource Management education*.

In addition, a CARPE I contract with the World Resources Institute was extended to continue the work of its GFW program. WRI was asked to submit an application from its Forest Governance Program to lead policy studies and initiatives. An international agreement with the World Conservation Union (IUCN) was extended to continue support in the region through a regional NGO, CEFDHAC (Conference sur les Ecosystemes de Forêts Denses et Humides d’Afrique Centrale).

Finally, a separate PASA with USDA and the University of Missouri was initiated in FY02, with the expectation that CARPE II would be managed by USDA. This PASA was eventually used to hire the CARPE II SO team leader and the CARPE SO team and to pay for certain other program management costs. All of these CARPE management costs are “program-funded” rather than funded through USAID’s operational expense accounts.

Most of these CARPE partners began CARPE II activities in the region in FY2003. The CARPE SO team leader arrived in Kinshasa to open program operations at the USAID/Kinshasa office in January, 2003.

⁵ Participating Agency Service Agreements (PASAs) are agreements that transfer funds and services between US federal agencies.

⁶ NASA subcontracted with the University of Maryland for much of this program.

Status of Program Funding: The USG's funding commitment to provide \$53 million from FY2002 through FY2005 to the CBFP has been met. USAID contributed \$3 million in FY 02 and \$45 million from FY03—05 (\$15 million each year, plus an additional \$1million earmarked by the US Congress for gorillas in FY 04 and \$2.5million earmarked for the Great Apes Conservation Fund in FY05). The US Fish and Wildlife Service and the State Department (\$2.25 million in ESF funds) funded the balance. The CARPE strategy statement recommends a funding level of \$15 million annually through FY2010.

In addition, CARPE agreements with the Implementing NGOs require “substantial” matching funds from the landscape leaders amounting in aggregate to more than 50% of the USAID contribution. Approximately \$150 million is also being “leveraged” from other CBFP partners: international donors and other non-USG sources.

II. Assessment of Program Performance

A. Performance at the landscape level

i. Analysis of progress towards land use planning and landscape management

The implementing partners originally proposed the landscape approach and identified the eleven priority landscapes. Later the Virungas focal area in Rwanda and the DRC also became one of the CARPE field locations. The landscape approach entails a systematic methodology to address threats both within and outside the protected areas, including deforestation, loss of habitat, pollution from oil extraction and mining, bushmeat trafficking, human migration and agricultural expansion, and other activities that involve both legal and illegal exploitation of natural resources. The CARPE strategy is based on the assumption that the landscape approach can mitigate these threats through improved natural resources management (NRM) planning, legal and regulatory reform, increased capacity, and broader stakeholder participation in the implementation of both policies and management. CARPE II's strategic objective to “reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resources management capacity” cannot be achieved without a broad, integrated approach that encompasses land uses other than protected areas.

Each landscape is unique and difficult to compare with the others. Criteria for choosing the landscapes included vulnerable and irreplaceable species or biodiversity richness, and/or ecosystems that had remained unusually intact or that were unique in the region. The delineation of landscape boundaries is being re-examined, and revised boundaries have been proposed by landscape leads for at least five of the landscapes to reflect a better understanding of the threats and options to address them. Several landscape level implementers also have determined that the greatest threats derive from far outside the landscape, especially the demand for bushmeat from distant urban markets or mining centers.

Implementing partners working in the landscapes have made significant progress in conducting biological and socio-economic surveys. There is not yet a consensus among all partners as to how to survey biodiversity. Most of the surveys within the CARPE landscapes are monitoring megafauna (elephants, gorillas), identifying populations, habitat, and migration patterns. This approach assumes that the populations of endangered megafauna are an indicator of the extent to which primary habitats are being protected. Other implementing partners argue that megafauna are not necessarily indicators of healthy, biologically diverse ecosystems, and that a more scientifically valid approach would be to monitor a much broader range of species, including plants, invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and birds, as well as large mammals. The Smithsonian Institution/Missouri Botanical Gardens (SI/MBG) program has introduced an approach focused on plants and vegetation, which can form the basis for long-term inventory and monitoring, as well as for the delineation of zones and decisions on management practices within zones.

This more intensive approach to biodiversity monitoring is being carried out in the Monts de Cristal LS segment in Gabon and in the Ituri-Epulu-Aru LS in the DRC. However, some NGO partners argue that this level of monitoring would be too costly to be feasible as a basin-wide approach, and would require resources that could be better invested in other activities. An integration of the two approaches should involve identification of specific threats, endangered and/or sensitive taxa (both plants and animals), and interventions that are expected to have an impact on ecosystems, and application of the intensive approach in targeted areas, while continuing the megafauna surveys over a larger area.

Landscape strategies and protected area management plans have been initiated in most landscapes. Landscapes that have made the most progress have prepared draft strategy plans for the overall landscape, draft management plans for protected areas, and have initiated zoning in areas outside the protected areas, such as community conservation reserves, wildlife reserves within forest concessions, and fishing zones. Socio-economic surveys are an important element in the preparation of conservation plans, and are also generally the first step to gather information needed for planning and interventions outside the protected areas. All of the implementing partners have made significant progress in conducting the socio-economic surveys and in using them to further analyze threats from human activities in the landscapes. Only a few landscape teams have progressed to the point of preparing management plans for zones outside the PAs. The work plan targets for IR 1.2, in terms of land use plans adopted and implemented, will only be met partially. The performance monitoring plan (PMP) defines an “Adopted Land Use Plan” as one that “is legally recognized by the legal controlling authorities that govern the specific land use types (Parks Services, Forestry Ministry etc).”⁷ For the most part, the land use plans have not met this standard of formal or official adoption; nevertheless, the landscape partners are moving forward with the implementation of the plans. USAID has agreed that landscape partners should move forward with simultaneous implementation activities, while working towards convening a landscape planning process and the adoption of management plans.

Landscapes that involve a wide range of local and international partners, that are implementing interventions in several zones, and that are building synergy between conservation and development activities, tend to be ones in which implementing partners have had a long-term presence. These areas were less disturbed by conflict and NGOs were able to maintain a presence at times when they had to pull out of other areas. Landscapes in which the implementing NGOs have launched activities more recently, including the Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru landscape and the Lac Toumba landscape segment, are still at the partner identification stage. Landscapes in which the NGOs have a much longer history of operation, such as the Sangha Tri-national (TNS), are much more advanced in terms of protected area conservation, as well as for broader land use management outside the protected areas. WWF has partnered with GTZ in TNS to address rural development, socio-economic and livelihood issues.⁸ Some of the NGO partners have been very successful at leveraging additional funding, by demonstrating that the landscape is a good investment for conservation and for possible future tourism.

All landscape implementers face enormous constraints, especially lack of national government investment in the protected areas and in park services personnel, who are very poorly paid. The governments may be providing even fewer resources in landscapes that appear to have low potential to generate revenues from tourism development. These factors also affect the extent to which NGO partners have been able to generate significant matching funds from other donors. Nevertheless, several landscapes, in which the implementing partners are relatively new, have overcome start-up challenges and have put in place a creditable range of activities in a short time.

⁷ PMP

⁸ Comments on draft evaluation report from WWF 02/03/2006

Table 1: Progress in meeting landscape level targets (as of September 2005)

Landscape, segment, partners, and country				Ind. 1.1 Number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans	Ind. 1.2 No. of different use-zones within landscapes with sustainable management plans
1	Monte Alen - Mont de Cristal				
Seg 1	CI (SL)	Equatorial Guinea	Monte Alen	LUP process 25% convened	CBNRM and ERZ plans 25% achieved
Seg 2	WCS (SL)	Gabon	Monts de Cristal	LUP strategy 25% achieved	PA strategy document finalized
Seg 2	WWF	Gabon	Monts de Cristal		
2	Gamba Conkoati				
Seg 1	WWF (LL)	Gabon	Gamba Conkoati	Land use planning process convened Strategy Completed FY05	PA LUP strategy 25% achieved; CBNRM strategy 20% achieved; ERZ LU design 70% complete
Seg 1	WCS	Gabon	Mayumba & Loanga NPs		PA management planning process 50% convened
Seg 2	WCS	ROC	Conkoati-Douli		PA & community reserve LUP process convened; PA design 50% & Community Reserve design 25% complete;
3	Lope – Chaillu – Louesse				
	WCS (LL)	Gabon		LUP Process 50% Pre-Convened	PA LUP processes convened, strategy documents finalized
		ROC			
4	Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri-National (TRIDOM)				
Seg 1	WWF (LL)	Gabon	Minkebe	LUP process 40% convened & plan 15% complete	PA Mgmt plans convened & design 10% complete; CBNRM & ERZs LUPs in progress
Seg 1	WCS	Gabon	Ivindo		
Seg 2	WCS (SL)	ROC	Odzala		
Seg 2	WWF	ROC	Odzala		PA, CBNRM & ERZ LUP processes 25% convened
	WWF	Cameroon	Dja-Boumba Bek	LUP process 40% convened & plan 60% complete	50% of PA & 65% CBNRM LUPs complete; ERZ LUP design 100% complete
5	Sangha Tri-national				
Seg 1	WWF (LL)	CAR	Dzanga-Sangha	Strategy document 60% achieved; LUP 50% implemented	LUP convened & design 75% complete; CBNRM hunting, agriculture & logging zone strategies in progress
	WWF	Cameroon	Lobeke		PA & CBNRM 100% of LUP design complete; ERZ design 50% complete
Seg 2	WCS (SL)	ROC	Nouabale-Ndoki		PA Strategy document 75% achieved; community hunting/NTFP zones & wildlife management in timber concession zones in progress
6	Leconi – Bateke – Lefini			LUP process 25% convened	PA LUP process convened; CBNRM LUP process 25% convened
	WCS (LL)	Gabon	Bateke		
	WCS	ROC	Lefini		PA LUP process 25-50% convened
7	Lac Tele - Lac Tumba				
Seg 1	WCS (SL)	ROC	Lac Tele	Land use planning process convened Strategy Completed FY05	Community Reserve LUP process convened
Seg 2	WWF (LL)	DRC	Lac Tumba		Scientific reserve LUP process convened & 30% of design completed; 40% of CBNRM LU design complete
8	Salonga – Lukenie – Sankuru			40% Land use planning process convened	
	WWF (LL)	DRC	Salonga Lukenie Sankuru		10% of LUP process convened
	WCS	DRC	Salonga NP		
9	Maringa - Lopori – Wamba				
	AWF (LL)	DRC	Lomako & Djolo	Land use planning process convened Strategy Completed FY05	PA and CBNRM plans 25% achieved as of FY05 (?)
	CI	DRC	Kokolopori & ERZ		CBNRM & ERZ plans 25% achieved as of FY05 (?)
10	Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega				
	CI (LL)	DRC	Maiko - Tayna	LU Planning Process 50% convened	Maiko PA 50% LUP design complete; Tayna Reserve management plan 85% completed; UGADEC reserves LUP design 25% complete; Itombwe strategy 20% achieved
	WWF	DRC	Kahuzi Biega NP		Kahuzi-Biega PA management plan 40% achieved; Itombwe Community Conservation Reserve LUP process 20% convened
	WCS	DRC	Kahuzi-Biega & Maiko NPs Itombwe CCR		
11	Ituri - Epulu – Aru				
	WCS (LL)	DRC	Ituri - Epulu - Aru	LUP pre-convened	PA LUP phase 15% complete, including agricultural zoning
12	Virungas Focal Area				
	AWF (LL)	DRC	Virungas NP	Commenced LUP process	Virunga NP 40% convened
	AWF	Rwanda	Volcans NP		PA management plan exists

The management planning in most of the landscapes has focused on conservation plans for the protected areas, including national parks, faunal reserves, and community reserves, with less attention given to plans for forest, oil, or other mineral concessions; and for agricultural, fisheries, CBNRM, and rural/urban community infrastructure zones. The planning for production zones outside the protected areas reflects the NGOs' conservation priorities, with most of the effort concentrated on wildlife corridors (usually within forest concessions) and on buffer zones. Efforts to develop livelihoods programs have, so far, emphasized subsistence agriculture, fishing, non-timber forest products, and community-based NRM, and have involved small-scale pilot interventions and demonstrations.

The emphasis on conservation plans over development plans derives from the NGO partners' main concern which is to protect biodiversity and key endangered species such as elephants, gorillas, and bonobos. Not all of the NGO implementing partners agree with the priority placed by USAID on broader approaches to land use planning. Some landscape leads seem to assume that delineation of zones accomplishes the land use planning process, and therefore they had not made much progress on developing management plans for the zones. The implementing partners work closely with government agencies charged with protected area conservation and management and have built the capacity of these agencies' personnel. They have more limited relationships with government agencies that have the legal authority to work in the landscape areas that are not protected areas (PAs), such as forest concessions. Some of the NGOs said that they only have agreements with governments to work with national park agencies in the protected areas, and therefore have no mandate to work with other agencies, such as Eaux et Forêts, on land use planning outside the protected areas. Some of the conservation NGOs have in-house expertise, for example in forestry, that could contribute to the development of logging concession plans, but personnel in the field tend to be wildlife specialists.

The USAID SO Team evaluates progress based on implementing partners' performance, and makes annual incremental funding allocations based on the technical and financial performance of the grantees. Performance targets were included in the Cooperative Agreements, but are established in more detail through the approval of the annual work plan and monitoring system. In addition to the annual report monitoring matrix, the implementing partners submit Means of Verification (MOV) and a narrative report. The narrative reports highlight successes, explain deviations from the work plan, problems that have constrained progress, benchmarks that have not been met, mitigating circumstances or factors outside of the implementing partners' control, and plans to make up any deficiencies.

The SO Team evaluates the annual reports and proposed work plans and uses a point system to compare CARPE sites across the basin. The achievement of benchmarks is used to determine annual budget allocations, as well as the total amount of available funds, financial performance, and organizational and segment pipelines. Therefore, some sites have received high overall scores based on the annual report and work plan, but a low funding allocation, because of unspent funds in the pipeline for the landscapes. The performance-based management system is intended to inform program decision-making and resource allocation and to advance the adaptive management process. It is also perceived by the implementing partners as a competition, which requires them to commit to ambitious work plans to secure funding. The idea of competition is positive if it motivates implementing partners to a higher level of achievement, and if it does not lead to unrealistic target inflation.

Conclusions.

- Most of the landscapes have made significant progress on biological and socio-economic surveys and initial zoning of landscape units, especially within protected areas, and are on track to meet indicator targets to create baselines and to convene the land use planning process by Sept. 2006.

- The targets for formal or official adoption of management plans probably will not be met by Sept. 2006. Nevertheless, partners are proceeding with the implementation of management plans without formal approval.
- Factors that have the greatest influence on the achievement of goals at the landscape level include: long-term NGO presence, previous investments in infrastructure and local partner capacity, existing information base for planning/management, NGOs' success at leveraging additional funding; and commitment by the lead NGOs to convening the land use planning process,
- The main constraints to progress at the landscape scale include: remoteness, difficult access to the sites, lack of an information base for planning/management, lack of infrastructure, lack of agreements in place to work with government agencies mandated to manage lands outside of PAs, low tourism potential, and low local partner capacity. In several landscapes, insecurity makes access impossible or dangerous in parts of the landscape (LS).
- Some implementing partners proposed over-ambitious work plans, and therefore did not meet their targets. The performance management system has proven effective in identifying sites where lagging implementation indicated a need to review resource allocations.

ii. Effective integration of LS partners

The development of strong linkages for cooperation between implementing partners is an important outcome for this phase of CARPE, especially linkages to expand the landscape approach to land use planning outside the protected areas. Development of land use plans for concession areas and other productive land use zones will require a greater level of commitment among partners to share best practices to successfully combat threats such as illegal logging and bushmeat trafficking. The implementing NGOs will also need to engage with additional partners, including government agencies such as Eaux et Forêts, private sector concession holders, and a broader range of local NGOs in the rural development and civil society sectors.

Lack of consensus and communication between partners has hindered planning and implementation in several landscapes. To some extent, this is due to differences in CARPE partners' management or conservation approaches. Some NGO partners emphasize the short-term need to secure protected areas, investing in training, equipment and infrastructure for eco-guard patrols. Other implementing partners focus on conserving protected areas by investing more resources into long-term research, to better understand the ecosystems and how to manage them, as well as to analyze the threats to protected areas, in order to design interventions to counteract them. Some NGOs direct efforts towards strengthening partners' capacity, while other NGOs are trying to extend their own capacity to tackle development and livelihoods issues.

Strong collaborative partnering relationships between international NGOs seem to be more the exception than the norm. Sites that have not experienced these problems include the Ituri-Epulu-Aru and Leconi-Bateke-Lefini landscapes, where only a few organizations form the partnership. The Gamba-Conkuati landscape involves a complex array of NGO, government, and private sector partners working in an effective collaboration. Trans-boundary interaction has included a formal cross-border landscape meeting which was held in 2005. Cross border threats have been identified and a draft action plan to address these threats has been developed. The Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri-National (TRIDOM) and Sangha Tri-national landscapes have demonstrated good cooperation, in spite of the difficulties of trans-boundary coordination.

Examples of poor coordination among LS partners that were cited in interviews implicated both landscapes leads and their non-lead partners. Landscape leads complained about lack of information about partners' activities, leading to possible duplication of effort; also late or incomplete submission of reports, work plans and means of verification (MOVs). Non-lead partners criticized the convening of the land use planning process, especially where partners had not been fully included in the process. Other coordination issues

involved management, performance and reporting problems; personality conflicts; and inadequate staff presence in the field. The response to questions about whether CARPE partners shared a common vision were mixed; but there were enough negative responses to the written questionnaire to indicate that there was not a clear consensus or a common vision for the landscape approach. This lack of consensus was confirmed through interviews with participants.

Landscape or segment leads have been designated for most sites, although at some sites this did not occur for administrative reasons.⁹ The SO Team leader has addressed questions about the role of the landscape leads and their responsibilities in several memos in response to implementing partners' questions. The performance monitoring plan (PMP) also provides very specific definitions of the terminology used to determine achievement of benchmarks, such as 'Land Use Planning Process Convened.' This benchmark is reached when "a finished, written strategy exists that plans tasks and responsibilities for a specified timeframe, at the end of which the entire landscape will be macro-zoned and some of the preliminary tasks have already begun (the landscape unit plan is the ultimate product of the strategy)."¹⁰ Nevertheless, implementing partners still expressed confusion, especially about the LS Leads' role in initiating this process, in deciding which partners should be involved, and in ensuring their input in the plan.

Landscape leads also pointed to existing structures, such as the *Comités de Coordination du Site* (Co-co-si) in the DRC, and suggested that they should convene the land use planning process. The Co-co-si committees were created to provide a coordination mechanism for the protected areas during the conflict. However, there still exists a great deal of confusion among national government representatives about the landscape approach, the delineation of the eleven landscapes, and what is meant by land use planning. It seems unlikely that the Co-co-sis are ready to take over the leadership for land use planning, although increasing local government officials' capacity with the objective of transferring this role to them, should be a priority.

According to the CTO's memo dated 3/16/2005, landscape leads are responsible for "preparing the integrated Annual Work Plan, Budget and managing the landscape/segment program according to their agreement with 'sub-partners' and they are also accountable to USAID for the results which are the sum of the efforts for the constellation of CARPE partners, whether they be sub recipients or not. CARPE expects that each landscape/segment leader should have a written agreement with the sub partners that, at a minimum specifies the administrative and management arrangements."¹¹

Most LS leads said that they see their role as a facilitator, rather than as a coordinator or leader of the other implementing partners. Some are reluctant to recruit additional partners, as this increases their management workload. They also find the process of entering into agreements with partners to be cumbersome and time consuming. In several landscapes, implementing partners receive funding through cooperative agreements with USAID, rather than through cooperative agreements with the landscape lead. Especially in these cases, where they do not have a prime and sub-recipient relationship, the landscape leads are concerned that they do not have authority to compel partners to meet performance requirements. They also would prefer to not have the added responsibility of managing partners.

Poor cooperation between NGO partners has not yet led to delays in implementing activities in the landscapes. Significant progress is being made in landscapes, even where collaboration has been most problematic. However, the lack of exchange of ideas, information, best practices, lessons learned, and

⁹ CTO Memo 3/16/2005

¹⁰ PMP

¹¹ CTO Memo 3/16/2005

successful models for replication, has the potential to undermine CARPE's potential as a regional program, addressing basin-wide threats to biodiversity and to forest degradation.

To compare progress between landscapes in terms of their achievement, NGO partners' vision for the landscape approach and their commitment to land use planning should be considered. CARPE and the participating NGO partners should build consensus for a common vision for the program, by engaging in partnerships with organizations that can provide expertise in areas in which the conservation organizations are weak; also in providing leadership to convene LS partners and involving them in strategy and work plan development; ensuring good information exchange between LS stakeholders; outreach to community organizations, private sector actors in the LS, and government agencies managing lands outside the PAs.

Conclusions

- The partnerships that are most effective are those where the respective capacity of the NGOs was the determining factor in assigning functions and in specifying the division of responsibility. At sites where long-term collaboration was already ongoing, the appropriate roles were usually clear. At newer sites, some partnerships were formed without a good mutual understanding of comparative strengths as the basis for organizations' roles.
- In cases where implementing partners receive funding through cooperative agreements with USAID rather than through cooperative agreements with the landscape lead, they do not have a sub recipient relationship with the landscape lead. This can exacerbate poor collaboration, as the partners are not compelled to cooperate with the LS lead and with other partners in the way that a sub-recipient would be.
- Although many useful models are being built that should be replicable across landscapes, the long-term potential for negative consequences due to ineffective partnerships is the failure to exchange and replicate models, and to share information, ideas and lessons learned.
- The factors that seem to contribute most to effective collaboration include a shared perception of threats that demand priority attention, and a clear understanding and appreciation for partners' strengths in terms of approaches or methodologies. Integration has been least effective where NGO partners were perceived to be parachuting experts in, rather than providing long-term, field-based staff with knowledge and experience at the site, and where partners were not involved in the development of landscape strategies and land-use plans.
- Some LS leads seem reluctant to make use of in-house expertise or of the expertise of other partners for land use planning; this applies, especially to the US Forest Service (USFS), even though the USFS has demonstrated clear leadership in multiple-use land planning, as well as long-term experience in planning for production forests, which is needed in concession areas and community extraction zones. The USFS can also help to develop cooperation with government agencies such as Eaux et Forêts in the Congo Basin countries. The role of the Implementing NGOs should be to provide leadership in convening, coordinating, and mobilizing the land use planning process, while building capacity to transfer the leadership of the process to local partners.

B. Progress on Cross-cutting and Country-Level Activities

Cross-cutting components were designed to address issues at the country level, such as policy, legislative and regulatory reform; and also to provide tools, technical specialization, and approaches that address issues across all of the CARPE landscapes. Cross-cutting partners include US federal agencies and other organizations providing specialized technical assistance in the areas of environmental governance, natural resources monitoring, and economic development.

The idea of cross-cutting activities emerged from a meeting of potential stakeholders in 2003. Because most of the CARPE funds are allocated for activities within the landscapes, it was envisioned that landscape leads would seek any needed outside expertise or technical services from qualified organizations in the broader “marketplace,” including NGOs, universities and federal agencies. For contractual reasons, the appropriated funds could not pass through the implementing partners to federal agencies; therefore USAID set up separate agreements with several of them. When the implementing NGOs still did not make use of the federal agencies’ expertise, USAID eventually developed specific scopes of work for their involvement. For example, the involvement of the USFS to conduct workshops and to prepare management plan templates and other training materials, has increased the understanding and application of land use planning approaches.

The implementing partners serving as the landscape and segment leads tend to be highly focused on their individual site-specific threats and conservation needs. In interviews, many of implementing partners said that they were poorly informed about the activities of other organizations working in the landscapes, but they acknowledged that a great deal of information is available through the CARPE website and from other sources. They explained that the problem is not that the information is not available. Rather it is more a case of information overload, and the need to concentrate on obtaining the data needed to meet reporting requirements for the landscapes for which they had an implementation or management responsibility.

i. Capacity Building

The cross-cutting component that has the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results is the capacity building component. Capacity in the region is generally very low and a variety of donors are beginning to make investments in institutional assessments and organizational strengthening. While the focus of CARPE is on local solutions and on management models to address specific threats to landscapes, CARPE was designed to support human and institutional capacity building at multiple levels .

CARPE’s overall approach is to transfer technical skills and management capabilities to local level resource users. CARPE’s comparative advantages for capacity building are in the areas of land use planning, natural resource monitoring, strengthening the role of local NGOs and CBOs, and management of protected areas. Capacity building within CARPE is carried out at a number of different levels and encompasses a wide range of topics. CARPE has funded programs through which approximately 2000 participants were trained during FY 2005.

Building capacity of regional networks and civil society. Institutional strengthening efforts have targeted networks and regional organizations, such as the Conference on Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems (CEFDHAC), and the Network for the Environment and Sustainable Development (NESDA). CARPE support to NESDA, an Africa-wide NGO, has been primarily to its Cameroon branch office through assistance from WRI to strengthen its capacity to carry out policy analysis and to support legislative reform. The WRI approach to building both individual and institutional capacity for policy research is rigorous and intensive, and the participants involved in the program have been published in scholarly journals and have received international recognition. This gives the researchers the credibility to take objective, analysis-based positions on controversial topics. There is also growing recognition of NESDA’s institutional leadership in convening stakeholder groups around specific policy issues and its potential to influence decision-making.

The CARPE grant to the World Conservation Union (IUCN) is principally for support to CEFDHAC, which has organized workshops and other activities to promote advocacy initiatives and to mobilize network members to participate in national and regional initiatives, such as the African Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (AFLEG), CBFP, and the Commission on the Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC). IUCN support for the Network of Local and Indigenous Population for the Sustainable Management of the Central African Moist Forest Ecosystems and for the Network of African Women for Sustainable

Development (REFADD), provides a unique opportunity for women and indigenous people to have a voice in these issues in the region.

Conference sur les Ecosystemes de Forets Denses et Humides d'Afrique Centrale (CEFDHAC) is a regional network composed of civil society representatives and is recognized as a forum through which a broad range of participants can engage in a dialogue on forest management and policy. CEFDHAC is often described as having an independent but complementary relationship to the Commission on the Forests of Central Africa (COMIFAC). Outside observers have commented that CEFDHAC is still loosely organized, that it has not developed strong internal structures, and that its capacity is spread thin. There are signs that CEFDHAC's institutional capacity has been diffused rather than strengthened, possibly as a result of trying to take on too many activities, which has diminished the network's ability to follow through on recommended actions and on its overall impact. Nevertheless, it has an important role to play. Institutional strengthening support should focus on defining this role, especially in relationship with COMIFAC and should focus on a limited set of objectives and on a clear plan of action.

Building capacity for civil society organizations and networks is a key element towards deepening understanding and advocacy for needed policy reforms, especially in the absence of broader USAID funded democracy and governance programs in the region. Capacity building programs for these organizations should increase analytical skills, demonstrate effective advocacy approaches, and assist them with planning, prioritization, and goal setting. In addition to civil society networks and researchers, WRI has built capacity in Cameroon for democracy and governance and for better understanding of natural resource policy issues within local and international NGOs, forestry agency technicians, local government representatives, and parliamentarians. In addition to providing natural resource information at the national level through the Interactive Forest Atlas, WRI/GFW has built capacity for natural resource monitoring at the sub-regional levels through COMIFAC and CEFDHAC.

Local communities and community associations. Training of community members at the landscape sites has been aimed at improving livelihoods and involving community members in the zoning and land use planning process. Strengthening of community based organizations (CBOs) has also focused on increasing their role in local governance through the creation of community reserves and associations. Practical livelihoods training has been conducted through demonstrations and extension, to: improve farming and fishing practices, introduce alternatives to bushmeat, to develop community based enterprises, such as eco-tourism, or to assist communities to re-establish trade networks, for example by organizing transport for produce to markets. Implementing partners have involved local communities in the zoning and land use planning process by training them in participatory, community mapping methods to delineate community land and resource use zones. Implementing partners have also organized training in data collection methods, to involve community members in baseline surveys and in natural resource monitoring. For example, WWF has trained members of a fishermen association and local NGO staff to collect data on the daily fish catch, including quantities, weight, and species; the amount sold per fisherman, and gross and net revenues. Building the capacity of CBOs to collect their own data, gives them a set of tools to manage the fisheries resource and to sustain the local economy. It also gives them a role in the planning process within the landscape.

In most of the Congo Basin countries, forest land is automatically state property, even though there is some recognition of forest communities' traditional rights and forestry codes that allow a community forest reserve designation. Several implementing partners have gained official support for the creation of community reserves within landscapes, and have begun working with community-based organizations to develop conservation plans for these reserves, and to strengthen the CBO's capacity to manage the reserves and implement the plans. In the Maiko-Tayna- Kahuzi-Biega landscape, the Tayna Gorilla Reserve was

established as a community conservation reserve through a Ministerial decree. The communities have established committees to map, zone, manage and patrol the reserve, and they hope to develop eco-tourism to generate revenues to sustain these activities and to create local employment. Several neighboring communities within the landscape have asked for assistance to develop similar community reserves. These communities organized the UGADEC (Union of Associations for the Conservation of Gorillas and Community Development of the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo) Federation in 2002. The Federation has an office in Goma, and is organized into five directorates for education and outreach, GIS, science, planning and community development, and administration and finance. Community development activities have focused on improving health services, and on creating awareness of links between human and environmental health.

Implementation of the small grants program under CARPE II was delayed due to contractual reasons. So far only a few local NGOs or community-based organizations have received grants or benefited from capacity building through the implementation of the grants, although leveraged funds were used for this purpose at some sites. In the Maringa-Lapori-Wamba landscape the CARPE small grants funds have been used to maximize results through local partners. AWF reports significant results made in strengthening local partnerships in the landscape through the small grants program.¹² In the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi-Biega landscape, Conservation International (CI) has provided subgrants (not small grants) to the Tayna Center for Conservation of Biology (TCCB), community organizations under UGADEC, and Vie Sauvage, with additional technical assistance provided by CI partners, DFGFI and BCI. These organizations are carrying out an array of conservation, development, training, and outreach activities within the landscape.¹³ Implementing partners should use the small grants funds to develop the capacity of local NGOs and CBOs to play larger roles in protected area conservation, community mobilization, land use planning, and economic development activities, in support of overall CARPE goals. A primary objective should be to develop organizations with the capacity to become full partners in CARPE's longer-term implementation.

National staff working at decentralized level. Most institutional capacity assessments have been limited to Park/Protected Area services units at the landscape level to identify training, equipment, and infrastructure needs.

National Park and PA administration: The landscape framework provides an effective umbrella under which to build park and protected area staff capacity. Essential staff training, equipment, and infrastructure needs are mostly being met by CARPE and program match funding. This was reflected in favorable assessments of implementing NGOs by park rangers and staffs. Beyond PA staffs, the capacity building experience produced mixed results and less comprehensive coverage. Government to government capacity building is underway through the US Forest Service (USFS) and with NPS undertaking support to Gabon park administrators. These initiatives show some promise but are subject to limitations discussed elsewhere in the document, including the lack of a mechanism to fund national agencies in the region. Other limitations include host government capacity and willingness to engage in transparent cooperation. Institutional strengthening activities have focused on providing training and equipment (patrol boats, radios, signs to mark boundaries, etc.) to eco-guards and survey teams and constructing or rehabilitating critical infrastructure, including patrol posts and office facilities. Capacity building of decentralized government staff has included training of park wardens in protected area administration and management; training of patrol units to carry out boundary monitoring, to identify signs of encroachment and illegal activities and to enforce the protected status of parks and reserves; and training data collection teams to carry out socio-economic and natural resource/biodiversity surveys and compile and report the data.

¹² Comments on draft evaluation report from AWF 02/03/2006

¹³ Comments on draft evaluation report from CI 02/03/2006

Implementing partners have also provided training on land use planning to national staff, and the transfer of land use planning skills methods to government partners has taken place mostly at the decentralized level. WCS and WWF have carried out joint training of wardens and eco-guards for all of Gabon. The training was carried out in the Gamba-Mayumba-Conkouati landscape with funding from the Moore Foundation. Significant resources have also been used to train park managers and staff in data collection, use of GPS, and imaging technology. In some landscapes, protected area management staff have been trained in conflict resolution and community outreach.

Government Agency Field Staff: CARPE did not undertake a training or manpower support role for government staff involved in natural resource management issues or in alternative livelihood strategies¹⁴. There has been little effort to engage national staff at the decentralized level, who work in agencies involved in management of forest concession lands, such as Eaux et Forêts. Most of the implementing partners say that they are constrained from working with these staff or involving them in capacity building activities, because the NGOs do not have an official mandate to partner with them. As a result, training in forest concession management, in participatory methodologies, in local administration and in other relevant areas has been mostly a bi-product of landscape specific planning and of meeting needs. Implementing NGOs have used additional donor support funds, including USFWS, to achieve some capacity building. USFS multi-use planning training and knowledge transfer has shown promise.

Forest Concessions: CARPE has been working with forest concession operators in and around several landscapes to bring them toward sustainable forest management practices and in one case toward Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification. NGO partners have involved ITTO, FSC, USFS and others to strengthen private operator capacities. The USFS secured a USAID-funded Global Development Alliance (GDA) grant to develop a reduced impact logging program for the Congo Basin. This initiative was designed to complement CARPE's objectives and activities. In the Ituri-Epulu-Aru landscape, WCS is working with the Enzyme Refiner's Association (ENRA) to control encroachment of the forest by farmers in the ENRA concession and to improve forest inventories and inventory techniques (through a SI/MAB sub-contract), in order to promote sustainable forest management practices. The needs far outweigh the coverage obtained thus far, but concession management practices will probably be transferable as models are clearly articulated.

Provincial government and local decentralized administration: WRI's work in Cameroon has shown promise for building local government capacity and towards transferring rights and responsibilities to the appropriate local structures. Some landscape programs have begun to develop village land use and conservation plans with local governments, but the region has been characterized by instability and by the absence of effective local governments, or by overly centralized structures, so progress has been limited. As WRI noted, Cameroon was chosen for initial policy and governance initiatives in the region because there must be a government structure in place to work with local government processes. Several of the landscapes overlap national, provincial, and local administrative boundaries, and this may be a factor contributing to limited involvement by local government units. Nevertheless, convincing local authorities to extend formal recognition of the status of community reserves or other landscape zones, is often the first step towards official designation at the national level. The participation of local leaders in these processes will help to legitimize their role in natural resource decision making. The capacity of provincial, district and local level government units has been strengthened through exposure to CARPE activities, including the Co-co-si structures in the DRC, and local government units in Cameroon that have been involved in WRI activities to transfer resource rights and responsibilities at the local level.

¹⁴ This was due, in part, to perceived restrictions on providing "direct" CARPE assistance to governments.

CARPE can point to the training of park managers and protected area staff as a successful outcome. Most of the protected areas have experienced a major increase in capacity, even though some protected areas are still understaffed or need additional investments in equipment and infrastructure. The capacity of government staff assigned to other decentralized agencies, such as those responsible for production forest management, varies a great deal. Implementing partners need to engage with these agencies as they expand activities outside the protected areas, and need to involve them in training on land use planning. These training opportunities should be identified to involve the agencies in activities linked to addressing a critical threat.

National staff working at national level. CARPE does not have a mechanism to fund centralized government agencies in the region. However, through the involvement of the US Federal Agencies, which have provided training and training materials, national level staff have participated in CARPE capacity building activities. The Smithsonian Institution's (SI) botany training courses have included senior level scientists and managers. SI built on this training by forming the Central African Botanists Network (REBAC), which has continued to build capacity in the region, focusing on leaders who can have impact within their institutions and governments. This network could be called upon to contribute to more targeted and intensive biodiversity surveys within landscapes. The SI/MBG program has unique qualifications to contribute to additional capacity building in biodiversity monitoring methods in the Congo Basin, especially through linkage with national research centers and universities. WCS also has a long-standing relationship with SI in support of its strategic vision to link national researchers with international researchers in the region to build individual and institutional capacity. The role of the US National Park Service is also to engage at the national level with centralized government agencies. The NPS led two workshops in FY05, on the legal and policy framework for a national park system; and on establishing and administering a concessions management program within the park system. Participants included park managers, staff from the national park council, and representatives from national staffs.

In Gabon, the USFS delivered three workshops, and organized a fourth one to be held in Feb. 2006 on the preparation and refinement of national park management plans. CNPN staff in Gabon participated in the workshops, which included training on development of annual NP workplans. The workshops resulted in the preparation of draft plans for Lope and Loango National Parks, and these plans will serve as models for the preparation of plans for Gabon's other NPs. In the Republic of Congo (ROC), the USFS has sent two teams to provide GIS training to the Centre National des Inventaires et de l'Aménagement Forestier (CNI AF). The training was provided in collaboration with WWF and WCS and covered topics including information needs assessments and developing protected area land cover datasets.¹⁵

Although other donors are providing technical assistance and training to national staff working at the national level, CARPE should look for opportunities to involve these personnel in landscape level activities, such as training events. This will increase their knowledge of and support for well structured field based activities and for CARPE.

University level education. In a few cases, university level centers have been strengthened or created with some assistance from CARPE partners. Conservation International has supported the development of a new Biodiversity Institute at the National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE). The new institute will have graduate level research and teaching facilities, through which the university will be able to greatly increase natural resource management and conservation capabilities in the country. The Tayna Center for Conservation of Biology (TCCB) is being constructed partially with CARPE funds and is training students at the university level in conservation and biological sciences. The Centre de Formation et de Recherche en

¹⁵ Comments on draft evaluation report from USFS 02/03/2006

Conservation Forestière (CEFRECOF) Research and Training Center in the Ituri Faunal Reserve, is managed by WCS through an MOU with ICCN. The Centre was built in large part with funding from USAID in the 1990s to host visiting scientists and to provide facilities for field courses conducted by the University of Kisangani's Dept. of Conservation Biology, and for training programs for ICCN staff and other government agencies. The University has held regular training courses at CEFRECOF, and is also part of the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Tropical Forest Science (CTFS) forest dynamics network. This network of large forest plots represents an important source of information to improve understanding of forest management implications in the region.¹⁶ It has been used for short-term training on conducting biological surveys, and also can support long-term student research projects. CARPE activities have involved students in research and surveys, and implementing partners' staff have provided mentoring and supervision of these students' work.

Other donors are providing much needed investments in universities and forestry schools in the region; nevertheless these institutions are generally very weak, and even limited CARPE support for university level training can have long-term impacts in terms of human resource development. Linkages between CARPE partners and universities and forestry schools to increase the skills of faculty and students by involving them in research, policy analysis, field level surveys and other activities, should be expanded.

Capacity building in natural resource monitoring. CARPE has responded to the demand for training in GIS technology and in the use of remote sensing data. Building capacity to use these tools is probably one of the most effective investments of training resources, especially given the vast area that the program is trying to monitor. Training has also been provided to community-based organizations in some landscapes to participate in community mapping and zoning, as well as some outreach and technical assistance related to livelihoods (agriculture, fisheries, and natural resource management). A GIS lab was set up at the University of Kinshasa and training was conducted in collaboration with ERAIFT, national agencies and NGO staff. The USFS sponsored three grant requests for GIS software and hardware from ESRI_USA (2 grants) and Leica Geosystems (1 grant), and a request from ESRI-France for the French language software package. These requests were approved and the software and hardware were distributed to CNPN, WWF, and WCS in Gabon. The University of Maryland staff provided GIS training to partners in the Lope landscape. WRI provided training on monitoring the use of GIS tools and technology in the DRC, ROC and Cameroon, and prepared a technical report assessing Remote Sensing and GIS capacity and training activities carried out in Central Africa. In Cameroon, GIS capacity has been built through training in remote sensing and GIS applications, development of the Interactive Forest Atlas, and workshops to promote its use in monitoring and advocacy.

Focusing capacity building on increasing skills and analysis in the use of remote sensing and GIS technology and applications is an effective use of training resources, given CARPE's emphasis on natural resource monitoring and the vast area of difficult to access terrain. There is also considerable interest and demand for this training. Several of CARPE's partners, including NASA/UMD, and WRI/GFW, have impressive credentials to bring to this task.

Conclusions

- CARPE has the potential to build capacity and understanding of the landscape approach and land use planning at all levels, but especially at the level of local and national government partners, and decentralized government partners, and to secure their buy-in to the landscape approach.
- Capacity building at the landscape level is needed to integrate local NGOs and CBOs more fully into the overall program through use of the small grants program and through other training activities.

¹⁶ Comments on draft evaluation report from WCS 02/03/2006

- CARPE's emphasis on institutionalizing natural resource monitoring requires capacity building capacity in a broad range of approaches, including remote sensing and GIS technologies, as well as on-the-ground biodiversity monitoring and forest inventory, which encompasses a variety of skills and assessment methods. Federal and university partners that can provide training, including the USFS, USFWS, the SI/MBG program, and UMD/NASA, can also help to build networks and linkages with national agencies, institutions and networks in the region.
- USAID has made it clear that CARPE's capacity building initiatives are not limited to training activities within the landscape. Country teams can do more to identify training priorities for strengthening civil society to support CARPE priorities at the national level. These networks and organizations are key CARPE elements to influence NRM policy, while building strong democratic fora. Efforts should be focused to ensure that networks such as CEFDHAC have the intended impact and that they will be self-sustaining over the long-term.

ii. Natural Resource Monitoring

The use of remote sensing technology to monitor forest cover, area, and change (through degradation or conversion), and the data on this provided by UMD and NASA, is seen as one of the most effective cross-cutting components. Because the data is perceived as objective and politically neutral, it can potentially be used in support of legislative and regulatory reform, land use planning, monitoring threats, and other decision-making. The availability of remotely sensed data is also especially important given the extensive area in which the implementing partners are working, the limited data available about the area, the difficulty of on-the-ground access, the limited local infrastructure and capacity, and the time and effort required to bring about and to monitor change.

An important contribution to achieving CARPE SO monitoring results is through an agreement with NASA/UMD. Funding for monitoring was limited initially and was further reduced by necessary cuts in the CARPE budget. The NASA/UMD collaboration utilizes US space-borne assets and makes the data available to the CARPE program through a variety of presentational formats and tools, including the interactive CARPE-Mapper. Monitoring tools and data are intended to support both regional and local levels. Monitoring forest cover change at the landscape level has been hampered by the absence of LANDSAT imagery in recent years, but should be in place for much of the remainder of CARPE II, and baseline images are available and being used to the extent that the budget allows. Because of Landsat malfunctions, UMD is undertaking to obtain data from other sources, with support from NASA. This data acquisition initiative represents an important contribution by the USG. More information about this is detailed in Annex XX: Comments from Implementing Partners.¹⁷

Natural resource monitoring brings together multiple partners in a structured way to address multi-faceted, long-term issues. The processes set up for the NR monitoring have yielded some of the most effective collaborations between CARPE partners, including the State of the Forest (SOF) report, increased GIS capabilities in the region, and shared data and information about the status of ecosystems, illegal activities, fire, and other threats to forests and to biodiversity. The process of bringing partners together to produce the SOF report, reaching consensus on the indicators, and putting in place the monitoring systems, is a significant accomplishment in itself, and it has gained broad international support. This process will be especially important for putting in place a more systematic approach to monitoring of biodiversity.

The University of Maryland (UMD) is working on updating baseline maps of the landscapes; mapping changes over time within the landscapes; and making the datasets available in digital format. The data provided by NASA/UMD has been used to chart landscape features such as roads, rivers, and villages and to

¹⁷ Comments on draft evaluation report from UMD 02/03/2006

delineate protected area boundaries, but it has not been used much for zoning and land use planning. As the database expands and as forest cover types are more accurately characterized through ground-truthing, the data and GIS analysis tools should prove more useful as the basis for identifying wildlife habitat and for forest management planning. The NASA/UMD data will probably be less useful in mapping biodiversity across the Congo basin. UMD supports regional capacity building through Observatoire Satellital des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (OSFAC) partners by developing training capacity at the University of Kinshasa's ERAIFT (Ecole régionale post-universitaire d'aménagement et de gestion intégrée des forêts tropicales). The assignment of a GIS Specialist to a field location (Kinshasa) has provided an important link between the work done by NASA/UMD and its application in the field. He has helped a range of implementers and stakeholders increase their understanding of how GIS can be used for land use zoning and planning. He has also disseminated data, provided training, and advised on the establishment of GIS labs in Gabon and the DRC.

Another important contribution has been the development of the Interactive Forestry Atlas of Cameroon. The Ministry of Forestry (MINFOF) officially recognized the product for distribution, which represents an important step towards greater transparency at the government level in terms of the availability of natural resource data. Because the interactive atlas has been so successful in Cameroon, WRI/GFW plans to develop pilot versions of a forest atlas for both Gabon and ROC this year. These will use already existing data, and will be used to demonstrate the utility of the tool. They will also carry out a data gap analysis to identify the need to create additional data. WRI/GFW has MOUs with Ministries charged with forestry and forest management in several countries. These MOUs provide opportunities to build relationships with national governments and to obtain "buy-in" from them for broader dissemination of and more transparent access to information about natural resources.

All of these activities have built capacity for natural resource monitoring, while at the same time making available much needed data for ongoing activities in the field. This set of activities represents an important factor in achieving Result 3 to institutionalize natural resource monitoring. The success of this strategy can be seen in the continuing demand for additional training and capacity building in this skill set at all levels.

Conclusions:

- The natural resources monitoring supported by NASA/UMD and GFW, despite remaining gaps, is providing objective assessments on the status of forest cover. This work is valued not just for the quality of the data provided, but also for its political neutrality. There is still a need for improved, systematic data collection, management, sharing and dissemination by and between CARPE partners.
- NGOs, so far, have used remote sensing data more for verification and adjustment of protected area boundaries, than to delineate land use zones. With some additional data, the GIS tools could be applied to better forest management in the concession areas, to identify pockets of important wildlife habitat, or evidence of illegal logging.
- Monitoring will continue to require CARPE resources and greater availability of funds could accelerate the establishment of necessary baselines across the landscapes, especially given the concerns about satellite malfunctions and the need to coordinate data acquisition from other sources.
- Input from CARPE landscapes into the SOF monitoring and reporting process is an important contribution to the CBFP that also increases public awareness, and is a valuable process in terms of building collaboration and information sharing.

iii. Policy

Although forestry and wildlife conservation legislation for Central African countries addresses basic legal and regulatory issues, there are some conflicting laws and gaps in the frameworks. Furthermore, field level

implementation of existing laws is hampered by low legal literacy, corruption, and weak enforcement agencies. CARPE support for governance interventions such as judicial reform, equipment and empowerment of enforcement authorities, and other measures to improve implementation of existing laws are constrained, because of limits on USAID direct funding to CARPE country governments. By engaging with government agencies, CARPE activities can help build the legitimacy of national institutions that have a valid role in natural resource decision-making. Support for good governance processes, as well as for specific policies, will help to institutionalize effective strategies and procedures.¹⁸

At the national level (and sometimes the Basin level), several major policy issues have been identified and most are being addressed by one or more donors:

1. Forestry Codes, Concession allocation and management: World Bank, French via export/import regulations for wood and wood products (FLEGT) Monitoring support from Global Forest Watch/WRI.
2. Mining and Forestry code compatibility/Natural resource management: World Bank (Gabon). Private sector leadership could develop internal industry regulations and models (e.g. Shell).
3. Creation/basic structure of National Park Services and protected area master plans through cooperation with other donors, including UNDP/GEF, ECOFAC, EU, GTZ.
4. Adoption of Sustainable forest management plans and codes of conduct: World Bank/GEF, Implementing NGOs working with individual forest concessions.
5. Community-based natural resource management and access to hunting/fishing in forestry concessions: Part of World Bank forestry management plans.
6. Wildlife Management/Bushmeat within forest eco-systems: Implementing NGOs and USFWS
7. Sustainable Financing: GEF/UNDP, WWF, CI, WCS, MacArthur Foundation.

The grant to WRI and CIFOR for policy work was relatively small, and most of the resources have been focused on Cameroon, where there was perceived to be more possibility for shifts in the legislative framework. WRI has worked with members of parliament in Cameroon, rather than with Ministries, to promote legal and regulatory reform. The parliamentary approach may take longer to bring about reform, than Ministerial decrees, but it reinforces accountability and strengthens representative governance. The reforms implemented in Cameroon have the potential to demonstrate the positive outcomes of legislative change to other governments in the region. WRI-IGP has supported policy work by individual analysts and researchers, legislators, ministries and government departments and local government leaders from several Central African nations.

The Heads of State Summit in Brazzaville in Feb. 2005, at which the COMIFAC Treaty was ratified, was a highly significant achievement for all of the parties involved, and an important outcome of CARPE support for an improved policy environment in the region. In the binding treaty, the Heads of State of the Congo basin countries agreed to support conservation and sustainable resource management and to harmonize forestry and biodiversity policies. The following are some additional successful outcomes from CARPE supported policy activities:

- The interactive forestry atlas for Cameroon produced by WRI/GFW contributes both to landscape level knowledge of the forest resource and to accountability, transparency and good governance at the national level.

¹⁸ Comments on draft evaluation report from WRI 02/03/2006

- Publications by WRI have addressed issues of distribution equity, for example how governments invest revenues generated from natural resource based industries, and comparisons between forest enterprises managed by communities and concession-holders. These publications have been widely disseminated. WRI mapping activities in Cameroon link poverty and environmental issues and are a tool to demonstrate and help assess equity in the distribution of benefits and costs.
- Capacity of policy researchers and advocacy organizations (NESDA and CEFDHAC) has been built by WRI and IUCN.
- WRI/GFW has been instrumental in developing a system to monitor forest concessions based on voluntary participation by the concession-holders. The Forest Concession Monitoring System (FORCOMS) will be a step towards adoption of practices to meet criteria for forest product certification. WRI, IUCN, and the Inter-African Forest Industry Association (IFIA), a private organization that includes logging and wood processing companies, are working together to design this system.
- Trans-boundary agreements covering protected areas in the TRI-DOM and TNS landscapes will reinforce protection of national parks, and increase cooperation across national boundaries to address threats such as poaching, bushmeat trade, and illegal logging.
- WCS has contributed to the World Bank Forest Sector Review document for DRC. This document when finalized will represent a major policy reform.

CARPE should continue to engage in policy issues through coordination with other donors and development partners to identify legislative and regulatory gaps; policy implementation, law enforcement and judicial strengthening needs; and opportunities for civil society involvement in governance. CARPE partners are particularly well positioned to identify policy issues emerging from landscape level implementation. Depending on whether policy roundtables already exist, CARPE can lead or participate in country level processes to identify priority issues and needed actions.

Conclusions:

- One major success of the CBFP has been to stimulate donor participation in forestry and conservation policies in the Congo Basin.
- The COMIFAC Plan de Convergence provides a vehicle for encouraging the countries of the region to come together on policy issues.
- CARPE partners appear to be influencing national policies by taking the lead in a) establishment of community management reserves and concession agreements (WCS/ROC, DFGI/Maiko) and b) developing landscape tourism plans (Gabon, Virunga).
- Several broader policy issues affect CARPE landscapes, but cannot be directly addressed by CARPE: e.g., demobilization of militias/soldiers; effective decentralization of government authorities, resolution of trans-boundary disputes. .

iv. Bushmeat

Bushmeat hunting is traditionally practiced by many indigenous groups for their own consumption, and this level of extraction is generally considered to be sustainable. In the last ten years there has been increasing awareness in the conservation community that commercial trade in bushmeat has greatly increased, due to demand from logging, mining, and military camps, and from urban markets. In addition the techniques and equipment used by hunters have become much more effective, and illegal poaching in protected areas has become more widespread. These factors have had a major impact on wildlife, including on endangered species in Central Africa. The illicit bushmeat trade could also have an impact on rural livelihoods, by depleting wildlife resources that traditional hunters depend on for their own household consumption. However, in some landscapes, the local hunters are supplementing their income by participating in the

bushmeat trade. Threats to wildlife from bushmeat hunting and trade will continue to be a concern, especially where poaching for ivory is not controlled and where there is continued conflict in the region. Bushmeat hunting and trade is cited as a major threat to biodiversity conservation and to key species in all of the landscapes.

CARPE partners have initiated monitoring and other interventions related to bushmeat in almost all landscapes. There is no standard approach to bushmeat monitoring, because the specific threat varies depending on the demand from military camps and on other economic activities in the broader landscape, such as mining and logging operations, access to markets and traders, roads and transportation, and urban demand. Bushmeat monitoring methods include reports by protected area patrols and wildlife enforcement agencies with data on confiscated game and weapons, socio-economic surveys to determine the relative importance of bushmeat to local livelihoods, and market research to estimate the amount of bushmeat being traded. These studies have given CARPE partners a better understanding of the economics of bushmeat trafficking. However there is a concern among some implementing partners that too much of the available resources are being spent on monitoring. More resources should be applied to using the information about bushmeat hunting and trade to develop interventions to reduce or control the threat to wildlife.

Although all CARPE countries have laws to prevent illegal hunting and to protect endangered species, national and local governments have little capacity to enforce the laws. In many areas there is a lack of political will to enforce the laws, possibly linked to a belief that the resource is inexhaustible. Implementing NGOs cannot implement enforcement activities directly – they can only train eco-guards, and provide support in the form of equipment, infrastructure, and salary supplements. The CARPE NGO partners have provided much of this support from their match contribution and other leveraged funds. There are also some positive examples of private sector involvement, for example cooperation with logging concessions within landscapes to develop and implement plans for wildlife conservation, by closing roads, prohibiting the practice of using bushmeat to feed workers, and outlawing the use of company vehicles to transport bushmeat.

Enforcement of existing bushmeat and anti-poaching laws are problematic simply because the areas to be covered by patrols are so large, and government agencies lack the resources to greatly increase enforcement personnel. Some implementing partners have promoted alternatives to bushmeat, such as raising poultry or small livestock as substitute protein sources. It will take time to transfer animal husbandry skills to reach the point where they are widely adopted by rural populations, especially in the absence of extension, veterinary, and credit services. Furthermore, producers will not be able to sell their meat competitively without better access to markets. Improved fishing and fish preservation techniques represent an excellent alternative to bushmeat, especially where there is a local preference for fish. Other partners have focused on developing alternative income generating projects or enterprises that will decrease participants' dependence on bushmeat hunting, processing and trade for their livelihoods.

Cooperation between WCS and Congolais Industrielle du Bois (CIB), a timber company with a forest concession in the ROC segment of the Sangha Tri-National landscape, has led to improved control of poaching and commercial bushmeat hunting. WCS works with local communities to map traditional hunting areas, to set quotas for wildlife capture, and to organize committees to enforce the regulations. CIB has introduced a permitting system to regulate hunting within the concession; it protects tree species that are important to gorilla habitat, and imports processed meat to supply its logging camps, to reduce the demand from the camps for bushmeat. WCS is helping CIB to meet FSC criteria for forest certification, including these steps to conserve wildlife as well as improve forest management.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provided a small grant to the Bushmeat Crisis Task Force to develop the Bushmeat Information Management and Analysis Project (Bushmeat IMAP). WRI/GFW also provided data and links to the GFW website. The IMAP includes online searchable databases of bibliographic references and bushmeat projects, and a tool to create maps showing factors contributing to bushmeat trade of various species.

Bushmeat issues have been mostly tackled by CARPE at the landscape level, but efforts to prevent bushmeat trafficking need to be addressed at the national policy level, as well as at the local enforcement level. Public awareness campaigns that increase awareness of the danger of transmitting diseases from wildlife to humans, such as simian HIV and Ebola, which can develop from processing and eating bushmeat, are also needed. It is not easy to change consumer preferences and it also takes time. However social marketing strategies have successfully promoted changes in other similar behaviors. A public awareness campaign must target specific audiences with carefully prepared messages. A public awareness campaign on reducing demand for bushmeat should include the following points:

- Health concerns with respect to bushmeat as a vector of disease;
- Continued bushmeat hunting is not sustainable and will rapidly deplete existing resources. This will have a negative impact on livelihoods across the basin;
- The private sector must play a role in addressing the illicit bushmeat trade, including investing in the production of alternative protein sources.

Conclusions

- Bushmeat surveillance efforts by implementing partners have focused on surveys and market analyses to determine economic forces that are driving the demand for bushmeat, and also on reports from protected area patrols and anti-poaching enforcement units.
- It is not necessary for all of the implementing partners to adopt the same methodology to monitor bushmeat trafficking in each landscape, and a too rigid monitoring methodology would be counterproductive. However, there is a need for a systematic approach to compiling the data and using it to push for stronger enforcement of existing laws.
- Bushmeat strategies should be integrated with other programs and economic development sectors such as poverty reduction, livelihoods, mining, and health.
- CARPE NRM activities outside of protected areas (forest and oil concession enforcement, local control) show promise of reducing a smaller scale bushmeat trade.

v. Gender

The USAID SO Team and the USAID/DRC Mission have provided leadership in this area, working with implementing partners on several occasions to foster an understanding of gender issues. A workshop was held in Kinshasa early on to encourage implementing partners to integrate gender into CARPE activities. The implementing NGOs acknowledge the importance of developing gender strategies to ensure that benefits are shared equally by men and women, but can provide few examples to illustrate that this has been done. Implementing partners generally report on gender only in terms of participation in training courses or in other CARPE sponsored events.

Although some of the participants interviewed pointed to livelihoods or training activities that involved women, they could not describe a strategy to deal with gender issues. There has been little effort to ensure that development activities result in equitable benefit sharing by both women and men. Rural women generally do not hunt, but they are involved in bushmeat processing, transportation, and marketing. Changes in policies regarding bushmeat and other natural resources, such as harvesting and trade of non-timber forest

products, will have an effect on women's livelihoods, but there is little available information about how this would impact women specifically.

Several women employed by CARPE NGO partners are in positions of responsibility, but on the government partners' side there are very few women in professional positions. NGOs and government partners cite the lack of women having an NRM education and experience in the region; however, increasing women's participation in training activities has also not been a priority. IUCN and CEFDHAC have provided technical assistance to the Network of African Women for Sustainable Development (REFADD) on forestry laws and policies that affect the livelihoods of women forest-dwellers. They worked with the REFADD network to develop strategies to raise awareness among women of basic conservation and biodiversity protection issues.

Conclusions

- Gender strategies have not been developed at either the country or the landscape level, and the underlying information needed to develop these strategies is lacking for the most part.
- The issues and recommendations raised in the report prepared by Nancy Diamond in 2002¹⁹, *Engendering CARPE*, are still valid and should be further developed or implemented.

C. Performance of the Small Grants Program

The small grants program was one of the most successful components under CARPE I, and was credited with making excellent progress towards building capacity among local NGOs. The grant review and award process was managed by the Biodiversity Support Programme (BSP), a consortium of The Nature Conservancy, World Resources Institute and World Wildlife Fund. WWF managed the grants program at the country level with Focal Points handling administration in Cameroon, Gabon and DRC. Although USAID funding for the BSP support to CARPE ended in 2001, the CARPE II design entailed continuation of the small grants program. Although initially the CARPE CTO planned to transfer the management of the grants program to the USDA PASA, USAID's legal staff did not approve this approach. Therefore it was decided to amend the cooperative agreements of the four international NGO implementing partners that were already working at the landscape level, to include funds for small grants in their budgets. An RFA was issued in August 2004, and the cooperative agreement budgets were subsequently modified. However, this resulted in a significant delay in re-launching the small grants program. In most of the CARPE sites, implementing partners have only recently initiated the steps to request proposals.

The CARPE Phase II small grants program was intended to be cross-cutting and to have very specific objectives to: "promote and build a constituency for conservation among local NGOs; foster partnerships between the US lead partner NGO and local NGOs in the field; fill gaps in CARPE's analytical framework; enable Central Africans to participate in CARPE activities leading to a conservation "buy-in"; reinforce local Civil Society capacities to sustain CARPE activities and objectives in the region; effectively integrate CARPE activities in the field and on the ground; and raise local awareness of CARPE and thereby provide knowledge and support for the program objectives."²⁰

A total of \$456,000 was available through the amended cooperative agreements, equivalent to about \$38,000 for the small grants program in each landscape. The rationale for allocating the funds to the landscape leads was that these implementing partners had a good knowledge of local NGOs and they also knew how these NGOs could best be integrated into landscape programs.

¹⁹ Diamond, Nancy, 2002. *Engendering CARPE: An Assessment of Gender Issues, Potential Impacts, & Opportunities Under the New CARPE Strategic Objective*. Final Report, USAID/Africa Bureau/SD, 30 pp.

²⁰ USAID Regional Development Services Office, East and Southern Africa, August 2004, RFA 623-P-04-046

The CARPE SO Team provided implementing partners with very thorough, detailed guidelines in the CARPE II Grant Manual to assist them in the selection of grantees and procedures for the management of the funds.²¹ However, implementing partners have complained that the administration of the small grants program places too great a management burden on program staff. The process of awarding the grants is not seen as overly cumbersome, but ensuring sub-grantees' compliance with USAID regulations is seen as a heavy administrative task. Nevertheless, the small grants program is an important mechanism towards building the capacity of local organizations, so that they can play more substantive roles in the future. Successful implementation of small grant funded projects also increases the local organizations' eligibility to attract funds from other donors.

In general, CARPE partners seemed to prefer that the small grants program be managed at the country level, and the procedures outline in the grants manual indicates that the process should be coordinated by the Focal points. In the ROC and Gabon, CARPE partners were coordinating the process at the country level at the time of the field visits. In the DRC, there seemed to be confusion among some CARPE partners about the availability of funds for the small grants program and in regard to the process for awarding grants. Once the AWF cooperative agreement had been amended to include funds for small grants, AWF proceeded to make awards to local partners in the Maringa-Lapori-Wamba landscape, without USAID review and approval.

Several implementing partners have funding from other sources that they have used to fund local partners through mechanisms similar to the CARPE small grants program, but with fewer restrictions on the use of the funds. These small grants are easier for the implementing partners to administer and supervise. For example, WWF has provided several small grants in the Gamba landscape from three different funding sources, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has made a number of small to medium grants to local and international organizations through the Great Apes Conservation Fund and the African Elephant Conservation Fund. USAID participates in the USFWS grant review and award process, but recipients are apparently not required to follow USAID procurement procedures.

Conclusions:

- The small grant program was viewed as a very positive element of CARPE I, especially in terms of building capacity of local partners, but has been delayed in CARPE II. The small grants program could still have an important capacity building impact, if the grants can be finalized quickly.
- Implementing NGOs are not clear about the scope of the small grant program and about USAID's rules regarding its use (only for activities inside landscapes; USAID's clearance role). Some of the confusion seems to stem from the RFA's emphasis on management of the grants at the landscape level, and the grants manual procedures which call for coordination at the country level.
- Most Implementing NGOs have access to non-USAID small grant funding and some landscape leads see the USAID program as an additional administrative burden.
- Small grants used to strengthen NGO/CBO institutional capacity (equipment, capacity building) have been especially appreciated by the recipients, and do achieve the objectives of building a conservation constituency and program buy-in.

D. Progress to date in meeting the three Intermediate Results

The overall CARPE Strategic Objective is: "to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity in nine central African

²¹ Tchamou, Nicodème, 2003, CARPE Phase II Small Grant Policy and Procedure Manual, 95 pp.

countries: the Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Republic of Congo, Burundi, Cameroon, Rwanda, and Sao Tome & Principe, and the DRC.”²² CARPE has three Intermediate Results (IRs):

IR 1: Natural resources managed sustainably;

IR 2: Natural resources governance (institutions, policies, laws) strengthened;

IR 3: Natural resources monitoring institutionalized.

The Results Framework with Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results Indicators is presented in Annex B.

The CARPE II Intermediate Result indicators and targets, were developed through a consensus process in collaboration with the principal NGO partners. The Performance Management Plan (PMP) which defines the indicators, the data collection methods, and the means of verification, was approved in Jan. 2004, and revised in March, 2005, with input from implementing partners. CARPE partners working at the landscape level prepare annual work plans with specific activities and implementation targets. They submit semi-annual and annual reports that report their progress against these work plan targets, and against the IR indicator targets. The work plans include activities such as meetings with local officials, convening stakeholders to conduct threats assessments, conducting community meetings, and workshops to determine landscape zones. The landscape leads forecast the extent to which these activities will be completed during the period covered by the work plan, and report on actual accomplishment of the targets. They must also determine the extent to which work plan accomplishments roll up as indicator targets at the landscape level. The target for IR Indicator 1.1 is reported as the extent to which the landscape planning process has been convened, defined as a percent.

At the end of FY 05, implementing partners submitted annual reports which showed the most significant progress to date towards the achievement of work plan targets and IR indicators. The reporting matrix has been structured, so that the targets and benchmarks roll up to the indicators in the CARPE PMP. The four NGO Landscape leads report on progress in each landscape, but only on targets for Indicators 1.1 and 1.2. Most of the implementing partners are conducting surveys on bushmeat off-take or demand, and some are conducting surveillance of illegal logging activities. The findings from these studies are submitted in the MOV documentation. However, they are not yet required to report on indicators 1.3 and 1.4 in the reporting matrix, as a consistent methodology to monitor these indicators has not been established. Annual reports on progress at the Country level are submitted by WWF (for Cameroon, CAR, DRC and Gabon), WCS (for ROC), and CI (for Equatorial Guinea). The Country Reports assess achievement of targets related to indicators 2.1, 2.2 and 3.2. WRI also submits an annual report on activities and progress towards indicators 2.1, 2.2, and 3.2. The report submitted by NASA/UMD addresses five tasks that are in support of monitoring for indicators 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3.

The IR indicators demonstrate incremental progress towards program benchmarks. In addition to the IR indicators there are two Strategic Objective level indicators designed to measure long-term impact:

SO 1: Change in area of forest from intact/pristine to “degraded,” modified, or secondary forest or to non-forest; and from “degraded” forest to non-forest.

SO 2: Population status for selected biodiversity “indicator” species such as: wide-ranging “landscape” species and/or ecological keystone species (e.g. elephants, large predators) and/or globally threatened species (such as, mountain gorillas, bonobos, etc.)

²² USAID, 2005. CARPE II Revised Performance Management Plan, 28 pp.

The SO indicators measure impact across the basin, and impact at this level will be affected by a number of factors that are not being addressed by CARPE interventions. Therefore SO indicators are measured separately from the IR indicators. The UMD and NASA are also the only CARPE partners providing data for SO 1. Remote sensing technologies are the main source of data for this analysis, because of the difficult access to large areas of many of the landscapes. All of the implementing partners working at the landscape level are conducting biological surveys. This data is being reported in the MOV reports, but is not being aggregated at the SO indicator level. A State of the Forest Report (SOF) committee has been formed to develop a consistent approach and a set of SOF indicators for biodiversity monitoring; and CARPE implementing partners are providing input into the process of identifying the indicators, as well as compiling the data for the SOF reports.

The goals for the CARPE II phase through FY 2006 are realistic, and the measures of accomplishment are fair. While there is a clear relationship between work plan activities and achievement of the IRs, some interpretation is needed to roll up work plan targets into indicator targets. Several landscape leads feel that the process is especially nebulous in terms of quantifying the convening process. This complicates the preparation of the Annual Report matrices and means of verification (MOVs), and limits their usefulness as a way for USAID to compile a clear narrative about project accomplishments. There are also inconsistencies between the reported targets and the MOVs. In February 2005, CARPE Country Teams were established to address nation-wide impacts that were not being picked up and reported at the landscape level. It is not clear yet whether this mechanism has improved reporting at the country level.

The Cooperative Agreements are performance based, and funding for annual work plans has been tied to results within the landscape. However, several NGO participants made the observation that some protected areas could attract funding from other donors, or eventually graduate from the need for ongoing donor assistance, especially those that have benefited from long-term support by NGOs. Some also have the potential to generate tourism revenues to support much of their conservation expenses. Several newly created protected areas or ones that have received little NGO or government support until recently, are generally the ones that have shown the slowest progress against performance indicators, partly due to difficult access and communications, and lack of existing infrastructure and local capacity. These protected areas do not necessarily have the most spectacular scenery, and, in fact, they may never be able to attract significant numbers of tourists. Nevertheless, they contain important biodiversity resources and unique ecosystems.

Tables from the FY05 Annual Report compiled by the CARPE SO team show progress to date towards reaching the longer-term IR objectives (see Annex G). The State of the Forest Report which will be issued in the spring of 2006 will also include data collected by CARPE implementing partners, along with other CBFP partners, and much of this information will overlap with CARPE IR indicators. The SOF committees are also working on the adoption of consistent monitoring and measurement approaches, which could help resolve some of the methodological problems encountered in trying to implement the CARPE PMP.

Additional comments and recommendations on progress to date in meeting the three Intermediate Results can be found in Annex F.

Conclusions:

- CARPE is on track to meet overall results and goals. Much of the reporting to date has been on the establishment of baselines and on the accomplishment of processes to create the enabling environment for the achievement of the IRs, rather than monitoring the impact of the activities.

- Serious concerns are the potential for further forest loss due to the opening of roads and agricultural encroachment, especially in the eastern basin regions. A net loss in terms of overall forest cover and continued forest degradation due to illegal logging and encroachment, is likely. The remote sensing data is proving to be the most effective means to monitor the indicators related to changes in forest area and conditions.
- COIMIFAC demands and related State of the Forest monitoring will require increasingly precise information, and much of this information will need to be systematically collected at the field level, using comparable methodologies.
- Capacity is increasing at the local level, especially for land use zone delineation and planning, but progress is much slower at the national and regional levels. Work plan targets tend to measure numbers of training participants and events rather than the 3.2 indicator to assess institutional capacity to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision-making -- although WRI has prepared a report on *“Preliminary assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision-making”*.
- Although most of the landscapes have some economic development activities to improve livelihoods in local communities, these tend to be small-scale, and have not yet had much impact on alleviating poverty.
- Several initiatives are underway that are aimed at illegal logging and anti-poaching, but so far CARPE efforts have focused more on monitoring rather than on laws and governance.

E. Progress in meeting USG objectives for the CBFP

The US government’s goal for the CBFP is to: “promote economic development, alleviate poverty, combat illegal logging, enhance anti-poaching laws, improve local governance, and conserve natural resources...through support for a network of national parks and protected areas, well-managed forestry concessions, and creation of economic opportunities for communities that depend upon the forest and wildlife resources of the Congo Basin.”²³ The CBFP goal summarizes the main elements of the CARPE strategic objective, and the State Department Fact Sheet describes the US partnership focus on the eleven landscapes. The State Department language encompasses a much broader partnership than CARPE II, while CARPE II is the principal mechanism through which the USG delivers the resources committed to the CBFP.

The CARPE goal and its IRs are much more hands-on and field-oriented than are the objectives of the CBFP Partnership which are to: “increase awareness of the programs being funded and implemented by its member organizations, enhance the efficiency of these programs and relevant coordination processes, and identify and eliminate gaps and overlaps in programs and funding.”²⁴ CARPE support for the SOF report has been the most effective means through which CARPE has communicated information about its contribution to the CBFP.

The CARPE strategic framework is also much more focused on conservation than the CBFP language that starts with “promoting economic development and alleviating poverty”. The CBFP has been extremely successful in augmenting the number of donors and the level of assistance provided in the Congo Basin, with almost all funding directed towards conservation and related objectives.

The CBFP was co-initiated by the US and South African governments as a process that would encourage governments of the region, donors and other partners to loosely coordinate needed policy reforms and

²³ Congo Basin Forest Partnership: US Contribution Fact Sheet, 2003. Bureau of Oceans and International and Scientific Affairs, US Dept. of State, Washington, DC

²⁴ Briefing Book – US Government User Version: Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE), Oct. 2005.

program actions. The CBFP was meant to have no formal structure, but would be “facilitated” initially by the USG. This facilitation initially was embodied in the part-time services of a former US Ambassador who tried to encourage information sharing policy reform within the region and donor program coordination. Operating without financial resources and without any recognized authority, this effort reportedly bore little fruit.

In 2004, CBFP mediation responsibilities were passed to the French government, which has been quite active in stimulating coordinated actions in the region. The “mediator”, a government minister located in Paris, is ably supported by a full-time assistant in Libreville. The French have used the COMIFAC structure and the ‘Plan de Convergence’ to address three priorities: 1) Sustainable Financing; 2) Establishing a governance system for timber exports (FLEG) from the region to Europe; and 3) Improving training capacity in the region, especially at forestry schools. Two expatriate advisors have now been assigned to work with COMIFAC headquarters to help implement the Plan de Convergence goals. COMIFAC will soon initiate a series of annual national meetings in each participating country and will name a “COMIFAC focal point” in each country (normally a senior official in the environment ministry). The French do not envisage that COMIFAC will become an organization that manages funding, but would remain as a coordination body.

The CARPE CTO and the US Embassy Regional Environment Officer stationed in Libreville are effectively the USG liaisons with the French mediation team and with COMIFAC. Working relations between these officials are excellent, as illustrated by French funding to support European involvement in a recent State of the Forest workshop.

The announcement of the CBFP, following on the actions of the 2000 Yaounde Summit and the Plan de Convergence, as well as the publicity related to Gabon’s creation of 13 national parks, have all stimulated a major increase in donor funding for conservation in the Congo Basin. Approximately \$150 million in new funds are being made available through a series of World Bank loans, a new E.U. ECOFAC program, a significant increase in French government assistance, and the arrival of some new donors in the region (Dutch government, Moore Foundation).

In the near future, the USG/USAID will need to decide if it wishes to: a) encourage the formalization of CBFP within the institutional structure of COMIFAC; b) provide direct technical support and indirect financial support to COMIFAC’s efforts to harmonize the region’s conservation policies; and c) utilize COMIFAC as a home for specific CARPE cross-cutting program activities.

Conclusions:

- The CBFP has been extraordinarily successful in bringing the conservation needs of the Congo Basin to a broader audience and in increasing donor funding.
- Active French “mediation” of the CBFP and COMIFAC should continue to be welcomed and supported by CARPE and the USG.
- CARPE should consider using COMIFAC as a “ventilator” to help publicize CARPE programs and to disseminate lessons learned.
- The SOF process is probably the best existing forum for building consensus and constitutes a common vision among the implementing partners.

III. Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

The management structure developed for CARPE II included several major changes from the CARPE I structure. CARPE I was managed by USAID/Washington with the support of an interagency coordination

committee. CARPE II is managed from Kinshasa and functions in the context of a USG international commitment to cooperation across 11 CARPE landscapes and the Virungas “focal area” in nine countries, only two of which have USAID missions. The landscapes are the basic framework for management decisions of CARPE, although some partner activities are executed outside of the landscapes, usually managed by other CARPE partners. The CARPE SO team in Kinshasa works with the support of USAID procurement and legal staff located in Nairobi, and the mechanisms used for obligating money involve collaboration with the EGAT and Africa bureaus in Washington. Finally, CARPE’s activities as linked with the CBFP are overseen by an Interagency Advisory Board in Washington made up of USG agency representatives and representatives from the CARPE federal agency implementing partners. Additionally, the CARPE management team includes up to five Focal Points who work at the country level under the technical direction of the CARPE SO team.

This is an unusually complex management structure for a USAID program, and the assessment team was asked to review seven key management issues in order to determine if improvements could be made in both the management structures and the management procedures now being utilized. These seven issues are discussed below.

Management Findings and Conclusions

A. Effectiveness of the transfer of CARPE Management to Kinshasa

The transfer of USAID management responsibilities to Kinshasa has had a very positive effect on USAID’s ability to coordinate a complex field-based program. The CARPE SO team’s presence in the region is viewed as essential to enable the team to: a) respond in a timely manner to needs and questions of implementing partners working in the region; b) monitor progress; c) improve collaboration among partners; d) build and widen partnerships with host governments, as well as with private sector entities in the region; and e) support CBFP political objectives by working with other donors and regional institutions. The CTO has been active and visible in the region, despite staff shortages. The move to Kinshasa had a perceived additional advantage of distancing the CTO from Washington-based conservation politics.

But this transfer has not been without significant problems. When the SO team leader arrived in Kinshasa to establish the CARPE office in January, 2003, USAID/Kinshasa was itself a newly created USAID office,²⁵ with very limited capacity to support the program logistically and technically. The SO team leader had therefore to hire and train his own CARPE staff members, but also had to train many USAID/K staff members in USAID procedures. The CARPE SO team has been quite small, including only one senior officer, two FSNs, one PSC and one or more interns. Recruiting a second CARPE expatriate staff member to work in Kinshasa has also proven to be difficult; and several support positions (Controller, Executive Officer) have been extremely difficult to fill.

Kinshasa is reasonably centrally located for the CARPE program, with most of its landscapes in the DRC, Gabon and the ROC. Commercial air travel from Kinshasa to other locations within the 7 country region is improving, but is not always efficient. For example, one must normally fly from Kinshasa to Nairobi, in order to travel to Yaounde, Cameroon. CARPE utilization of private AirServe planes to fly to landscape sites and between CARPE countries has been extremely helpful in offering alternative flight options to both CARPE CTO staff and CARPE partner organizations. Neither of the most likely alternative locations for the CARPE management team, Libreville, Gabon and Yaounde, Cameroon, have functioning USAID missions; however, they might be considered as fallback locations in case of future political turmoil in the DRC. Most

²⁵ USAID/Kinshasa terminated operations in ____ due to the civil conflict and re-opened its doors in _____. Unlike most USAID missions, due to the long hiatus, there is no tradition of experienced Foreign Service National (FSN) officers who form the core of most USAID administrative and financial support offices.

CARPE partners have established offices in Kinshasa, which makes it a growing hub for informal, as well formal, coordination amongst partners. Each of the CARPE-funded Implementing NGOs, except for Conservation International, has a senior officer stationed in Kinshasa.²⁶

The move to Kinshasa has not necessarily led to improved support for CARPE from USAID's procurement and legal offices. These support functions were transferred from Washington to the USAID Regional Office (REDSO) in Nairobi. However, the regional contracts officer (RCO) responsible for CARPE has changed four times over less than three years, and the regional legal advisor (RLA) position has been vacant in the past and has again been vacant for several months. This lack of continuity contributed to significant delays of often several months and up to nine months in RCO approval of several implementing NGO subcontracts and sub grants. A belated RLA decision blocked the CARPE SO team from initiating the CARPE II small grants program as originally planned (effectively delaying use of this resource until year 3 of the program); and another RLA decision resulted in the need to prepare individual Environmental Impact Assessments prior to funding most of the significant field program activities. RCO support has "significantly improved" in recent months, and both the RCO and RLA have delegated several responsibilities to the CTO. Meanwhile, USAID technical support, provided by USAID/Washington when requested by the CTO, has reportedly been good.

Coordination between CARPE and the USAID mission in Kinshasa has been quite good, with strong program support from the two mission directors that have served there since 2002. Beginning in FY 2002, USAID/K financed a project with economic growth funding (SO 4) that would provide complementary development activities in the Lac Tumba landscape. and there has been some effort to ensure that CARPE landscapes are priority locations for mission-funded SANRU health/family planning/HIV-AIDS activities. USAID/Rwanda, on the other hand, has not yet provided any complementary assistance to the Virunga landscape from its mission budget, but has facilitated CARPE discussions with the GOR and has been generally supportive of the program.

The transfer of CARPE management to Kinshasa has left a vacuum in Washington and the role of the Interagency Advisory Board is now unclear to USG partners. This group now meets only on special occasions, e.g., when the CTO is in Washington and had not met for a year prior to briefing and answering questions posed by the assessment team. No Washington or U.S.-based structure has been developed that includes all of the CARPE implementing partners (Implementing NGOs, federal agencies and other partners such as WRI). The only functional coordination mechanism appears to be the work of the Editorial Board for the annual CARPE-initiated State of the Forest report, with the University of Maryland as the lead editor.

Although CARPE is supported by a project officer in USAID's Africa Bureau and with 10% of the time of a technical officer in the central Environment Office, these positions have focused on internal USAID requirements (budget, reporting) and "fire fighting", e.g., responding to Congressional queries. This support has not been particularly visible in representing CARPE to other donors such as the World Bank, to the Congress, or even to the full set of CARPE partners.

The level of interest of the US Department of State in CARPE and especially in its creation, the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership (CBFP), also is waning. The USG filled the role of CBFP facilitator from 2002-mid 2004 with the part-time availability of a former Ambassador who operated without sufficient funding and authority to be effective. Now that the facilitator role has been transferred to the French government, State

²⁶ CI's recently modified global institutional strategy distances the organization from direct implementation responsibilities. CI now typically provides funding to sub-grantees for program implementation (such as DFGFI and BCI) and has fewer CI staff located in program regions. The one CI field officer in the CARPE region was relocated, due to family reasons, in early 2005 and has not yet been replaced.

Department interest in the region's environment and conservation issues has lessened, perhaps inevitably given the passage of time. Embassy personnel could not remember receiving any messages from Washington on CARPE or CBFP-related environment or conservation related issues for the past year. One State environment officer stationed in Libreville (one of three OES "Hub" positions in Africa) is responsible for covering all of West and Central Africa, including all CBFP-related issues.

Despite the apparent lessened senior level USG involvement in Washington, Congressional interest in the CBFP and CARPE remains strong and bipartisan. Although the USG commitment to the CBFP formally expires in FY2005, the foreign assistance legislation for FY2006 includes \$15 million in earmarked funding for CARPE (the same level as in previous years), as well as an additional \$2.5 million for the USFWS for activities in the CBFP region.

Conclusions:

- The transfer of CARPE management responsibilities to the field has been effective in focusing USAID attention on the field where it should be.
- The transfer has made it much easier to maintain reasonably close coordination with Implementing NGOs and with other field managers in Kinshasa and the region. Consequently, USAID is much more visible to Implementing NGOs and donors and is modestly more effective with national governments.
- The CTO has been extremely active and available to all parties, but has been hampered by a small staff and problems with his "eyes and ears" (the focal points).
- Despite relocation of the CARPE office to Kinshasa, USG presence and attention to environmental issues in the region has been minimal (one part-time State Department officer and the SO team leader). USG presence is also limited by the absence of USAID bilateral agreements with any of the countries in the region and a USAID mission presence only in DRC and Rwanda.
- CARPE coordination with the USAID mission program in DRC is good. Initial efforts to supplement CARPE presence in landscapes with other USAID-funded programs (economic growth and health) are underway in one landscape.
- Meanwhile in Washington, interagency and partner coordination has atrophied. The TOR of the inter-institutional body in Washington is unclear to USG partners and no inter-institutional body, including all partners, has been established. USAID/W support has been at the working level with little/no direct contact with the World Bank, AFR or AF leadership, or the Congress.

B. Roles, Responsibilities and Staffing of USAID, its partners and other actors

USAID and the CARPE SO team: The traditional roles and responsibilities for a USAID CARPE SO team include strategic planning and program design, program management, monitoring and evaluation and liaison (often including policy dialogue) with the host government(s) and with other donors. These roles have been carried out very actively and effectively by the CARPE SO team and appear to be accepted by the CARPE partners. The CTO has been very aggressive in establishing a program framework and a program monitoring plan (PMP) for what was initially a well-funded initiative with vague, difficult-to-measure objectives. The implementing NGOs have gradually accepted (and even applauded) the leadership of the CTO in transforming CARPE into a results-based program with region-wide indicators of achievement. Some partners report that "they have gone back to school" to learn how to prepare annual work plans and how to monitor program results using the CARPE framework. CARPE SO team staffing, however, has been limited by: a) an informal budget limitation of \$1 million for "CARPE management" imposed by USAID/AFR that made it impossible for the SO team leader to establish the team of seven that he initially wanted to manage

the program²⁷; and b) difficulties in staffing the deputy director position (the position was filled for only six months due to health problems of a late-arriving incumbent; and there have been delays in recruiting and fielding a replacement). A series of interns and personal service contractors have carried out functions that would normally be performed by USAID staffers (FSOs and FSNs). These staffing and funding problems have limited the ability of the CTO to carry out all of his functions, despite his reputation as “a person who seems to work 24 hours a day.”

The Implementing NGOs: The roles and responsibilities of the four large US based environmental NGOs are clearly spelled out in their individual cooperative agreements. The implementing NGOs (and USAID) feel comfortable with most of these responsibilities, although CARPE financing has resulted in a major expansion of their existing programs in the region and has enabled the initiation of new programs. The implementing NGOs are grappling with several management issues²⁸ as part of this expansion:

1. Sub-contracting to other partners for work in the landscapes has been slow and laborious in part due to NGO delays;
2. Procedures for efficient transfer of funds from NGO headquarters to landscapes have not always been efficient, especially for WWF due to its international structure and because of problems in funds control in their Kinshasa office;
3. Making sub-grants to local NGOs using USAID procedures has been slow, with only AWF and CI aggressively using this resource; and
4. Meeting USAID work plan and program monitoring requirements, more stringent than other of the NGO funding sources, has more than normal staff time.

Many of the management responsibilities related to these complex programs in remote landscapes are carried out by Ph.D. technical specialists with modest training in program management. In response to these management weaknesses, most implementing NGOs have beefed up their country-level management support teams and some have established new and more efficient financial and administrative management systems. It is not yet clear whether the qualifications and/or training of landscape leaders and the composition of the NGO landscape teams are now adequate to carry out program activities with the level of controls required by USAID regulations.

The Federal Agencies: The CARPE SO team leader envisaged roles and responsibilities for several USG federal agencies that included: a) providing “market driven” services to implementing NGOs for work within the landscapes; b) meeting some of the “cross-cutting” needs of national government institutions, such as a national park service or the ministry of environment, separate from CARPE landscape activities; and c) bringing additional funding into the program to help finance their activities in the region. These roles and expectations have not been fully understood or accepted by all of the CARPE partners. The implementing NGOs have rarely called upon the federal agency services to work in landscapes with the exception of USFS land use planning and the GIS support provided by the NASA/UMD. The implementing NGOs have never transferred any of their landscape funds to the federal agencies via the ‘market’ mechanism envisaged. Although some cross-cutting issues were identified and agreed upon as important for the CARPE program, there has been no clear identification of a leader for a ‘cross cutting issue’ among the federal agencies. Informally, NASA/UMD. provides leadership for GIS mapping and monitoring, including the State of the

²⁷ The costs of stationing an expatriate in this region are quite high, estimated by CARPE at approximately \$450,000/year. Third country national (TCN) costs approximate \$300,000/year.

²⁸ The role of “landscape leader” and his/her responsibility for the work of other CARPE partners in the landscape, especially those with unbundled funding will be discussed later in this chapter.

Forest report; USFS provides some leadership for multi-use land use planning; and WRI provides leadership in forest monitoring via Global Forest Watch program.

The Park Service support directly to host governments has been less than satisfactory, in part because the visiting personnel had little or no previous experience in Central Africa and limited French language capacity.

National Governments: Many governments in the region have a history of colonial and then autocratic centralized administration from the capital. In several countries, it has been sometimes difficult to get clear and consistent program guidance from two or more government department leaders (a not-unheard-of problem in the US, as well). Most of these governments do not have much experience working with USAID and have little knowledge of USAID rules and regulations. Therefore, their roles in relation to CARPE are not at all clear to them. Their expectation that CARPE would provide funding and direct program assistance to governments has not been met. Even those officials that now accept that USAID cannot provide “direct” assistance to them in the absence of bilateral country agreements, still complain that they are inadequately involved in program planning and are also not informed about the CARPE activities in their country. At worst, they see CARPE as a program wherein the US government simply provides funds to US conservation organizations to carry out the NGO’s agendas in huge tracts of their countries. These governments contrast this “assistance” unfavorably with donor programs managed by the European Union, the World Bank and other bilateral donors that are managed in direct cooperation with host government institutions.

C. Coordination Among Partners

USAID believes that coordination among the various implementing partners at various levels of interaction is essential to the achievement of CARPE objectives. Coordination, however, does not come easily, especially for implementing NGOs that have traditionally seen themselves as competitors.

Strategic Planning: The implementing NGOs carried out the initial strategic planning that led to: a) the Yaounde Declaration that established COMIFAC and prioritized conservation work in 11 landscapes; b) the announcement of the CBFP that would fund activities in these landscapes; and c) the “partnering” or division of responsibilities between implementing NGOs who will manage specific landscape and landscape segment programs. By contrast, during the initial years of CARPE implementation, they have deferred to USAID leadership for strategic planning, with two notable and important exceptions: a) joint action in the form of a letter signed in 2004 by all of the implementing NGOs and by some donors to urge President Kabilla to maintain a promised DRC moratorium on new forestry concession agreements; b) a proposal to establish a Congo Basin Sustainable Financing mechanism, initiated by WWF, CI, WCS and other donors (UNDP/GEF, MacArthur Foundation), at the region’s first workshop on sustainable financing for conservation in November, 2005. The Implementing NGOs have been unified in support of World Bank policy leadership, as part of forest program conditionality and have supported the COMIFAC “Plan de Convergence” as a mechanism to harmonize (and improve) forest and conservation-related legislation and regulations among governments in the region.

Country level coordination: The CARPE structure envisages a CARPE-funded “Focal Point” as the linchpin to ensure country level coordination and communication among CARPE partners and between CARPE and the host government. As discussed below, the focal point mechanism has not been effective in carrying out these responsibilities. Informal coordination often takes place among the key implementing NGOs operating in a country, the World Bank, other donors and, sometimes, the CARPE SO team, often in relation to issues related to World Bank program conditionality or the need for policy reform. These informal processes often leave out the host government. CARPE has not yet established a mechanism for bringing together the host

government, CARPE partners and the CARPE SO team to plan and review progress in meeting CARPE objectives.

Coordination within landscapes: The CARPE SO team leader has required coordinated annual work plans within each landscape, under the leadership of the “landscape leader.” The ‘lead’ is responsible for ensuring that planned results are achieved by each partner in the landscape²⁹. Several landscape leaders complain that this cannot be accomplished without the lead having control over all CARPE budget resources flowing into the landscape (e.g. bundling all funding through the landscape lead organization). Except for AWF coordination planning in Virunga, landscape leaders have not established a calendar of events that would ensure effective joint planning and the periodic monitoring of program results. In some cases, implementing NGOs continue to operate almost independently within landscapes. Program differences and budget issues are not resolved in the landscape but are delegated to the CARPE SO team leader for resolution.

Broad coordination among all key stakeholders has been well facilitated by most landscape leaders in and around national parks, building on the DRC “Co-co-si” mechanism or, in Gabon, the “Committee Technique de Gestion”. This multi-stakeholder coordination has rarely been expanded to address the full landscape.

Coordination in program monitoring and evaluation: The CARPE SO team has appropriately taken the lead in encouraging a single program-wide PMP. The SO team leader has also strongly encouraged the development of annual State of the Forest reports, using indicators of success that have been agreed upon not only by CARPE partners, but also by other donor organizations and private sector specialists.

Coordination in leveraging resources and public support: The establishment of the CBFP has been extraordinarily successful in leveraging approximately \$150 million in new donor and private sector resources towards meeting conservation objectives in Central Africa. USAID’s matching funds requirement (between 50% and 100% for the four implementing NGOs) has also leveraged significant additional funding. The implementing NGOs are historically competitive in raising private resources and in garnering public support to support their programs. However, the new concept of a Congo Basin Trust Fund and other modes of sustainable financing for conservation in the region is a key opportunity for a joint effort to leverage additional private sector and donor resources.

Conclusions:

- The role of the USAID SO team leader and the CARPE office has been gradually assimilated and accepted by the partners. USAID’s responsibilities have been carried out very actively and effectively. However, the USG/USAID responsibilities regarding liaison with host governments are not clearly defined or effective. They have not been carried out aggressively by existing focal points and have not been carried out by the CARPE SO team in the absence of focal points.
- The roles of the Implementing NGOs are clear with the exception of the degree of landscape leader’s control over unbundled landscape segments. When disputes occur, the methods of problem resolution have not been clearly defined but are evolving with experience. Establishing a clearer structural path to problem resolution would be useful.
- The roles of the federal agencies are not clearly understood by the partners as a whole. The “market approach” to buying their services has failed. Only USFS, NASA/UMD, WRI/GFW and USFWS have a proven track record that is likely to lead to a continuing demand for their presence in CARPE. USFWS has now become an alternative funding source with its own earmarked funding..

²⁹ The level of landscape coordination is recognized by all CARPE parties to be much more limited in transboundary settings, especially where there is a significant geographic barrier such as a river separating landscape segments in different countries.

- The roles of national governments in relation to CARPE are not at all clear to them. Their expectations of involvement have not been met; even when they have accepted that no CARPE funding will be provided directly to them. Indirect support provided via partners has not been well documented or acknowledged by governments. CARPE's annual planning process essentially ignores national governments, although it typically involves locally-based government officials in the landscapes. In contrast, the national government roles in relation to COMIFAC appear clear to both parties.
- CARPE's relationship to COMIFAC is still evolving with the SO team leader and the State Department Regional Environment Officer clearly the point people for coordination .
- Coordination with local leaders and other actors in the landscapes has been most effective when Comite Technique de Gestion or Co-co-si (DRC) have been formally established and where government officials have been substantively involved in planning and monitoring.
- Landscape coordination for Transboundary landscapes must be seen very differently from other landscapes. The magnitude and importance of the agenda for cross border coordination differs in each landscape. Implementing NGOs may not have the organizational resources or political weight to deal with many of these issues effectively on their own.
- Coordination at the national level is carried out informally by the implementing NGOs; and in DRC also with the CARPE SO team leader. The focal point does not appear to be a major player in this coordination except in Cameroon.
- USAID has provided the setting and the agenda for most of the M&E coordination among partners. Coordination in the preparation and submission of matrices and landscape reporting is moving forward reasonably well.
- The State of the Forest report has proven, in its initial iteration, to be an excellent model for encouraging both multi-partner and COMIFAC coordination. There appears to be very limited coordination/transfer of technical approaches and lessons learned among the landscapes.
- Coordination by CARPE partners for: a) strategic planning, b) leveraging resources and public support and c) for policy advocacy is the exception rather than the rule. One major success was the forest concession letter in DRC signed by all major CARPE partners and sent to the President, in support of World Bank conditionality.
- NGO staffing appears to be adequate with the striking exception of CI which is virtually not present in the region. NGO staffing is expatriate-intensive and therefore relatively expensive at this early stage of CARPE implementation. The costs for these expatriates are typically covered by a variety of funding sources and not just CARPE.
- USG staffing (US Embassy and CARPE) is inadequate to deal with both CARPE program management and to provide support for CBFP objectives.

D. CARPE SO team's management of the cooperative agreements

In 2002, USAID chose to use existing Leader with Associate cooperative agreements to solicit RFA applications from the four implementing NGOs that had developed the CBFP proposal. This decision was reportedly made in part, in order to move quickly towards program implementation. However, none of the initial applications were deemed fully acceptable and revised applications were solicited and eventually accepted.. In responding to the RFAs, the implementing NGOs worked together to arrange partnerships (called 'teaming agreements') deciding among themselves which organizations would have "lead" and supportive responsibilities for each of the 11 landscapes and 15 landscape segments. In some cases, applicants also proposed sub-contract relationships with other organizations, such as CARE.

The associate awards³⁰ signed with each of the four implementing NGOs included the same four “substantial involvement” clauses which defined USAID’s role in program oversight:

- Approval of annual implementation/work plans
- Approval of performance monitoring plans
- Approval of key personnel
- Approval of changes of teaming agreements and changes in those key personnel.

Other terms of the associate awards were the submission of quarterly financial reports and semi-annual technical reports. These terms are all quite normal for USAID agreements.

However, one unusual element of these agreements was their structure as “performance based” agreements, similar to USAID’s performance based contracts. Although the grading criteria and the scoring system for assessing performance in each landscape segment were transparent, this structure gives USAID an unusually strong role for a cooperative agreement in determining annual budget levels that are based on program performance. Similarly, USAID’s requirements concerning the details of the annual plans and performance monitoring plans are unusually detailed by the CARPE SO team. Work plans must be described at the activity task level (e.g. “meet with authorities”, “draft policy proposal”). In practice this has allowed the CTO to see and veto even small budget items such as “extend electrification to herbarium” and “purchase two desktops and one laptop”, again an unusual level of involvement for the CTO of a cooperative agreement. The annual report guidance announced by USAID was also quite detailed (15 pages long in its May, 2005 revision). The amount of reporting required of the implementing NGOs normally fills several CD-ROMs each reporting period. According to the CARPE SO team, this is needed in order to provide inputs into six reports to USAID/W or to the US Congress.

This level of involvement has allowed the CTO to be extremely knowledgeable and, some would say, unusually intrusive in the management of the cooperative agreements. The CTO believes that this level of review and dialogue has been needed by the implementing NGOs (“Without this, they would have been lost”) as they gradually learned how to meet USAID planning, monitoring and reporting requirements.³¹ Perhaps contrary to expectations, the landscape leaders are practically unanimous in welcoming and valuing these detailed comments which they say have enabled them to make improvements in subsequent plans and reports.

Despite the heavy level of CTO involvement, the CARPE SO team gets high marks from the implementing NGOs for the speed and quality of their approvals and report comments. Most approvals of key personnel were provided within 1-2 days (sometimes within 2 hours). The major concerns of partners in this reporting process have been: a) seemingly unending revisions of work plans throughout the year (especially a requested revision two weeks before the end of that year’s reporting period); b) changes in what needs to be reported in the PMP; and c) delays in RCO Nairobi approvals of subcontracts and sub grants. One major concern about the structure of the cooperating agreements is their lack of control over landscape management of all CARPE funds, especially unbundled funding that flows to their landscapes. This makes it difficult for them to enforce quality control and to provide incentives for other partners to heed their advice. A second major concern is the short-term nature of the elaborate planning process. They would prefer to

³⁰ Awards made under an existing Leader with Associate Cooperative Agreement are called “associate awards”.

³¹ The CTO’s written comments on reports are often quite detailed, in one case he and his team provided 6 single spaced pages of comments along with 17 pages of annexes to a semi-annual report.

prepare and receive approvals for multi-year plans, even if incremental USAID funding would necessitate modifications in those multi-year plans at a later date.

Conclusions:

- The LWA associate award structure seems to be working well during program implementation, with no major complaints from USAID or its LWA partners.
- The most significant problems in agreement execution relate to: a) long delays in the approvals of sub-contracts and sub-grants during periods of short staffing in RCO/Nairobi; b) absence of RLA support; and c) continuing revisions in work plans and PMP reporting requirements.
- The degree of USAID substantial involvement defined in the cooperative agreements looks normal, but has been exercised in a very aggressive way via detailing of work plan and monitoring requirements. This seems justified by USAID's need to establish an effective program framework for 11 dispersed landscapes and for other cross cutting activities, as well as to ensure quality in the representation of US interests.
- Most partners have accepted or have seen value in USAID's insistence on planning and monitoring at this level of detail.
- The structure of the LWA cooperative agreements encourages a landscape by landscape focus and provides few incentives for implementing NGOs to make hard budgeting choices among landscapes. Budgeting and monitoring by landscape segment has put a very heavy load on the CARPE SO team, with the team involved with annual budget decisions on 11 landscapes and 15 landscape segments, including small areas that would be described elsewhere as mini-projects (funding as low as \$150,000/year). All NGO-issued small grants (as tiny as a few thousand dollars) also require USAID approval.

E. Have the Current Agreement Arrangements and the Landscape Leader Approach been effective?

USAID decided to utilize existing LWA cooperative agreements to request applications for work in each of eleven landscapes and in landscape segments. The LWA mechanism is perfectly legal for this purpose. Indeed it was created, in part, to reduce the need for lengthy procurements and to utilize organizations that had proven their capacity, through pre-competition, to respond to USAID mission requirements. Since all but one ³² of the implementing NGOs had worked in the region for decades (often without USAID funds), USAID might have also considered funding the expansion of their programs through grants, rather than cooperative agreements where USAID has more substantial involvement. However, when the USG took the lead in initiating the CBFP as a key element of US foreign policy for the region, it became clear that the USG role must be more significant and a cooperative agreement would be the proper mechanism for funding the landscapes.

The RFAs encouraged "teaming agreements," so that the proper mix of skills would ideally be provided to implement very complex programs over vast geographical areas. Each landscape would have an assigned NGO landscape lead responsible to USAID for managing and coordinating the work plan and budget for all the implementing partners for that landscape. The roles of the landscape leads are detailed in the cooperative agreements.

One of the most controversial elements of the CARPE II program has been breadth of involvement and the dominant role of the four implementing NGOs in receiving and managing program funds. In some cases, the "teaming agreements" included more than one conservation NGO and also other NGOs or small businesses

³² Conservation International had not executed programs in Central Africa prior to the CBFP.

with other skills (community development, enterprise development, governance), but many traditional contractors or grantees see themselves “frozen out” by the present arrangements.

Operational relationships between landscape leads and other “team” organizations have often not been smooth, especially in single-country landscapes³³. Three factors that seem to have affected these operational relationships are: 1) limited capacity by the implementing NGOs to efficiently prepare and complete sub-contracting or sub-granting agreements; 2) the limited management experience of landscape leaders and, in some cases, their limited interest in managing sub-contracts or sub-grants in the face of so many other work priorities in their remote landscape and 3) a preference of implementing NGOs to use the talents and skills they know best - those of their own organization.

Another problem relates more to the structure that USAID decided to use for the landscapes. USAID has not always channeled all landscape funding through the lead organization and has “unbundled” funding.³⁴ This is most common when two implementing NGOs are working in the same landscape. The process avoids the need for USAID to pay double-overheads (NICRA or “indirect costs”) as the lead NGO passes the funds to the second.³⁵ The lack of funding control by landscape leads undercuts their ability to review and approve annual budgets and to manage funding priorities for the total landscape. Landscape leads then complain that they are held accountable for landscape planning and program execution, and are “scored” by the CARPE SO team on overall landscape performance, but do not have the authority to withhold funding from an under performing partner. By contrast, several segment leaders and sub-contractors complain that the landscape lead already has too much authority and is making decisions with little knowledge of what is needed in an adjacent segment.

When conflicts arise, there has been uncertainty about what procedures should be utilized to resolve them within the landscape. In practice, the issue has typically been forwarded to the SO team leader for his adjudication and resolution.

Suggestions from implementing NGOs for resolving these problems include:

- Maintain the present level of authorities, but require planning to be done jointly via annual planning meetings of all landscape partners. Clearly define mediation remedies for disputes (including the use of 3rd neutral parties).
- Pass all CARPE landscape funds through the “lead” organization and enhance the authority of the landscape leader. Require the “lead” organizations to avoid double-overheads by passing on the segment funding to the segment “leads” with no fee or a lower-than-NICRA fee.
- Do not bundle funding for transnational landscapes, especially those separated by a major geographic division (e.g. the Congo River). A few key issues and tasks for transnational cooperation that are within the management control of the Implementing NGOs should be defined in each segment plan.

Conclusions:

- Use of existing LWAs to fund CARPE II landscape activities meets USAID procurement regulations, but has been criticized by other potential partners, who feel “frozen out” from the program.
- The teaming arrangements for landscapes tended to focus resources in the lead organization, did not include multiple organizations with varied skills, and have often not been well executed in many landscapes..

³³ The degree of “lead” oversight and control for a multi-national landscape is viewed by all parties as much less involved.

³⁴ This is done because of bureaucratic issues, for example, to obligate end-of-year funds that were not expected by the program.

³⁵ To date, only CI has provided funds to sub-grantees without charging an overhead fee.

- The landscape leader approach has been generally acceptable with some exceptions. The NGO division of labor within landscapes is usually quite clear and there is little duplication. CARPE-funded activities are normally supplemented by an equally large set of activities managed by the same Implementing NGOs but funded from other sources (including matching funds).
- Most landscape leaders have not felt strong enough authority to veto program suggestions of other Implementing NGOs in the landscape. These issues have typically been passed on to the SO team leader for resolution.

F. Roles and Effectiveness of Focal Points

During CARPE I, the focal points hired in several countries through the Biodiversity Support Program and WWF were the main presence of CARPE in those countries. The job requirements for the focal points called for respected senior conservation specialists or former government officials. At least two strong focal points were hired during Phase I and were effective. They were particularly visible as managers of small grant programs in each country and helped to facilitate the field work of CARPE I partners based in the US.

The job descriptions of the focal points were augmented for Phase II with its new landscape focus,. These persons would now have a much stronger role to play in: a) monitoring landscape activities carried out by implementing NGOs, b) providing a much more active liaison role with central governments; and providing support for “cross cutting” activities.. Initially, the SO team leader planned that focal points would be hired and administratively managed through WWF country offices but would report operationally to the CARPE SO team. Each focal point location would have three employees, a senior officer, a program assistant and a secretary at the cost of \$150,000 per focal point, including travel expenses. One continuing responsibility would be for the CARPE II focal points to manage the small grant program that would be funded through a USDA PASA. Just prior to completing the PASA procurement process, USAID’s legal office judged that the PASA could not be used to transfer small grant funds. Subsequently in 2003 the small grant responsibility was transferred to landscape leaders. Over this two year period of uncertainty regarding the small grant program, the functions of the focal points seemed diminished. Only the Cameroon focal point has provided continuous and effective service during CARPE II. A DRC focal point was hired by WWF for a more prestigious position and a new recruit will take this position in December, 2005 after a 9 month hiatus. The Gabon focal point has been ineffective and was fired by WWF/Gabon with USAID approval in November, 2005. There has been no focal point in the ROC until late 2005, due to significant delays in defining new contractual arrangements that would enable WCS to hire and manage the focal point function there.

The location of the focal points at the headquarters of an implementing NGO and their dependence on that NGO for logistical support has given many CARPE observers the strong impression that the focal points had limited independence. For example, they would probably find it difficult to criticize their home entity as part of their monitoring responsibilities. Other CARPE partners working in the same country sometimes doubted the independence and even the confidentiality of focal point analysis. Their location with implementing NGOs also re-enforced host government perceptions that USAID’s basic objective of CARPE was to support NGO programs, rather than to retain a balance between NGO and host government objectives.

With the transfer of program execution responsibilities to Kinshasa and to the landscapes, there has been uncertainty about the TOR for these focal points. Managing small grants was initially a major responsibility of the focal points and provided excellent access to NGOs and CBOS in the country; however, as explained above, this role never materialized during CARPE II. Needed revisions in the job description were addressed in a spring 2003 workshop when new job descriptions were agreed upon and again in February, 2005, when “managing the CARPE country team” was added to their list of responsibilities.

Conclusions:

- The focal point system has been ineffective in CARPE II due to: a) difficulties with staffing; b) the transfer of small grant fund management to implementing NGOs; and c) uncertainties regarding the roles and responsibilities of Focal Points.
- The job description for the focal points has evolved during CARPE II. The most needed roles appear to be: a) effective liaison and frequent communication with national government officials; b) managing the CARPE “country team” process; c) maintaining liaison with non-landscape NGOs and civil society, ideally with the help of a small grants fund; d) recommending non-landscape CARPE activities; e) coordinating or participating in advocacy activities on high priority conservation policy issues and f) monitoring and reporting on the progress of landscape-level activities including those operated by their “home” NGO.
- CARPE II has very little basis for determining whether focal points with adequate skills can be hired and can indeed carry out these expanded roles. Only one position (Cameroon) has been filled with a qualified officer during a significant period of CARPE II’s life to date.
- Administratively locating focal points with Implementing NGOs has not worked well. It leads to the appearance or reality of conflict of interest and makes it difficult for focal points to achieve independence for their tasks of landscape monitoring, coordination with national governments, and policy advocacy. A similar problem would occur if the focal points managed a CARPE small grant fund within the administrative structures of Implementing NGOs.

IV. Assessment of Strategic Design

The Strategic Objective of CARPE II is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity in its nine participating central African countries. This SO is approved for the period from January 2003 to September 2011, but follow-on continuation is anticipated until and possibly beyond 2015.

Essentially, CARPE II has three major design elements:

- Grants to large international conservation NGOs (Implementing NGOs) leveraging their country and regional presence to implement field “landscape” level activities;
- A set of mostly US-based organizations that work across landscapes in common thematic areas, such as multiple-use planning, forest monitoring, policy and governance and uncontrolled hunting;
- A regional program management structure based in USAID Kinshasa, with country-specific focal points as program antennae and modest backstop and coordination functions in Washington.

These elements provide a strong foundation for the program and are keys to much of its success. The ability to work through established NGOs under challenging conditions enabled substantial progress to take place after only three years of implementation. The thematic cross-cutting actors have contributed to the development of analyses, implementation and monitoring tools and to an increased base of information. The management structure has endeavored successfully to create an overall sense of CARPE and to hold implementers to a results focus in executing the design. CARPE II intended to determine workable models and governance regimes and to build local capacity toward eventual sustainability. Capacity building toward sustainability is in its early stages, yet CARPE has contributed to the expansion of protected areas systems in several countries, notably Gabon; it has initiated promising models of resource management and private sector participation; and the program has helped build broad commitment to conservation principles through its cooperative agreements.

The procedures that link and govern the interaction between these design elements, however, were hastily assembled to meet a pressing need to scale up in response to the CBFP commitment. In practice, design weaknesses have hindered smooth functioning, forcing CARPE stakeholders to apply adaptive management solutions in the attempt to minimize their impact on program performance. This section identifies strengths, weaknesses and operational issues grounded in the design, draws conclusions and makes suggestions to mitigate issues in the shorter term, and to optimize the program in the years ahead. The anticipated follow-on to CARPE II, projected for the 2011-2015 period, can be expected to focus much more on issues of institutional strengthening and sustainability.

A. Is CARPE on track to Meet its Long Term Goal -- Strengths and Weaknesses of Design

CARPE's first phase evolved from a coalescence of activities funded under the earlier USAID Small Countries Program. Numerous but isolated conservation pilot activities were pulled together under a single CARPE I umbrella in 1995. This move reflected a growing awareness that the challenges of forest conservation and biodiversity protection were substantial, and, moreover, that they were manifest at transnational and basin-wide levels.

Most of the original partners continue to participate in the current phase and thus have a long history of operating in the region with USAID funding, but with little or no USAID presence. This ability to operate independently and under isolated circumstances formed a building block of both the first and more importantly the second phase of the program's implementation structures. Without this base, it is difficult to envision an effective mechanism under which CARPE II/CBFP funds could have achieved the significant conservation advances of the nature outlined in the preceding sections. That this has taken place in a period of conflict, and emergence from the resulting disorder is a testament to the dedication of CARPE's management team, implementing partners and protected area guards and wardens.

USAID program management shifted to the region for CARPE II with the aim of bringing management closer to the challenges of field level implementation. Chapter Two underscores the general success achieved by this move. The fortuitous confluence of this geographic shift with the US commitment to the CBFP made CARPE the obvious choice as the primary executing agent for the USG's 3-year promise to support the partnership. Using CARPE to support CBFP validated the design assumption that USAID could successfully operate in areas of little or no presence. The reliance on NGO operators with their own autonomous presence was critical but also lowered the profile of USAID, especially to external stakeholders including both national governments and other donors. Additionally, the rapid scale up lead to a number of design compromises:

- Too strong of a linking of funds to geographic areas without adequately linking them to existing governance regimes. Specifically, this led several observers to characterizing the landscape grants as "pork" for the conservation movement with minimal CARPE ownership by national governments.
- Insufficient USAID management structure for the scope of the undertaking;
- A design that did not facilitate important cross-cutting, transversal functions such as determining and promoting best practices, monitoring, and policy coordination that were dispersed across a confusing array of USG and NGO organizations whose efforts were very unevenly implemented in scope, scale, and geographic focus;
- Disproportionate support to one of three intermediate results via a strong weighting of funding and emphasis on local, mostly protected area-level implementation and strengthening of local staffs; and

- Isolation of Washington-based partners which tended to be cut off more by the management shift and remain insufficiently integrated with the landscape focus of most of the implementation effort.

The landscape approach offers a complement to the traditional park and PA-based approaches to biodiversity conservation by addressing conservation functions beyond park borders in a manner consistent with social, cultural, and economic development needs. As executed, the models being developed around the essential biodiversity assets in CARPE's landscapes address core threats arising from forest cutting, excessive game and Bushmeat exploitation, mining and, unsustainable local resource management practices, population growth and land pressures.

Participatory development activities outside the protected areas show early promise. Although they are beginning to bear results, essentially, the field program to date has resulted in a consolidation of conservation and particularly protected area management in and around selected core areas within landscapes and a notable strengthening of local park and protected area management staffs. From previous sections, it emerges that LWA mechanism did not naturally produce Cooperative Agreement partnering arrangements that adequately address the full range of natural resource management, regional planning and local administration and policy issues. The design and budget parameters restricted other non-landscape level partners from fully addressing unmet needs and the sub-grantee/contractor and cross-cutting market place functions have been unevenly used and appear to tax NGO management capacities.

CARPE II brings the key pieces and functions to the table, but has not always used them as foreseen in the original design. For example, basin level monitoring remains partially integrated with landscape activities and impacts; the use of specialized organizations to address cross-cutting themes was not widely called upon. Design issues are often associated with a specific program component that affect the efficiency in achieving results.

Assessing strengths and weaknesses of selected specific components further described below helps suggest how they would benefit from modification and realignment.

Landscape Leaders and Landscape partnerships: NGOs have autonomous presence in the region and can operate independently of USG direct presence and support. In many cases, long presence and experience working in landscape enables effective leveraging of prior achievements. In other cases, implementing NGOs are able to transfer lessons and approaches from similar challenges addressed in similar programs in the region and surroundings. The use of established organizations with bilateral agreements in place as landscape leaders, provides a single mechanism to address a range of specific program needs. Landscape leads can develop or build a longer term commitment to an area, thus contributing to making partnerships work better over time. Leaders give USAID a single point for management accountability. A need for overall coordination is recognized and attributed.

Relationships between leads and subs, especially when subs are other LWA eligible NGOs, have been awkward and in a few instances, dysfunctional. Landscapes are so large and expansive that effective communication and coordination is challenging, costly and management intensive; Leadership roles vis a vis other partners are not clear or fully accepted; the LWA mechanism sets up large Implementing NGOs in competition for limited resources, with the resulting division of tasks not fully reflecting the comparative advantages of each. WCS, for example, has been strong in research; CI has relative strengths in conservation finance and more recently, cost efficient management of sub-grants and contracts. The current design (as implemented) allocates resources geographically and attempts to use sub-grants and contracts, as well as partnerships with cross-cutting organizations. NGO partners push for autonomy and do not naturally work

well together; they tend to overshadow local ministry and park officials and can elicit national feelings of loss of sovereignty; They sometimes lack a leadership mandate, especially for large isolated landscapes or where trans-border linkages are difficult and where there is no natural host government counterpart.

Transnational landscape structures: CARPE effectively recognized the need to manage landscape issues across borders and linked design to transnational funding and implementation concerns. Transnational problem identification and coordination are sanctioned by governments which have developed a variety of transnational mechanisms that operate at local cross border and regional/international levels. Some of the problems manifest themselves across borders and require international efforts to resolve. The international nature of protected area complexes and surrounding landscapes attracts funding.

Not all issues are transnational and structures of landscape coordination may be overly cumbersome when there is no need to actively address them. Transnational program coordination is difficult to implement and sustain.

Marketplace/crosscutter function and use of USG Partners: SI, FWS, NPS, NASA, USFS: Involving third party providers allows partners to identify needs and internal shortcoming and draw on a pre-selected group of specialized support institutions' specialized skills. The mechanism also helps bring USG into NGO dominated program design structure, which among other benefits, allows for government to government relations in technical areas.

In practice , they have not been well integrated with other program components. NGO funds are programmed independently thus service providers are not widely used; providers not necessarily most qualified or able to provide consistent support. Some have limited Central Africa experience or capacity to provide continuity in bringing their experience to the effort.

CARPE Management Structure and Focal Points: Active involvement of USAID management provides necessary cohesion. Performance-related feedback to implementing partners holds Implementing NGOs to task and minimizes intra-partnership tensions; USAID management has engendered focus on results; and encourages (within budget limitations) sharing of lessons and information across multiple implementers. Focal Points can represent overall program interests in political and technical meetings and other fora; they extend USAID limited resources especially in non-presence countries. Finally, they are independent of Implementing NGOs.

Over involvement in detail such as activity level verification and small grant approvals and amendments: USAID (staff) is too small for such a large program, i.e. subject to "single point failure" Irregular articulation between Kinshasa and Washington adds to a gap between landscape and non-landscape components. Lack of definition of Washington multi-agency coordination and backstop functions reduces Washington's contribution to overall management, Operational failure of Focal Points is based on division of technical and administrative supervision. As formal employees of one NGO, it limits their ability to objectively oversee the employer organization in the same way as other CARPE "competitors". Focal points can be seen as disruptive or even as "police" by NGO implementers. They are unproven in carrying out some new responsibilities.

Conclusions:

- With appropriate adjustments, CARPE II is and should stay on track to achieve its goals of reducing the rate of forest degradation and protecting biodiversity by 2015.³⁶
- The move from Phase I to Phase II successfully built on limited CARPE I and other NGO programs to leverage the established advantages of the international NGOs. The design specified much of the CARPE funding as NGO set-asides for landscape work, which resulted in challenges of integration internally, across landscapes, between NGO and national level institutions, and between NGO landscapes and non-landscape based partners including USAID management.
- The shift from Washington-based management to a field office enabled USAID to initiate and pursue necessary program management and coordination. Without this design modification, USAID would most certainly not have pulled the diverse pieces of CARPE into a coherent program (see management section). A few program components including those that are geographically remote (from Kinshasa) and some Washington-based CARPE implementing partners are disadvantaged. There is some risk in concentrating resources in Kinshasa (continued stability of Kinshasa as an operating environment).
- Working through established and/or newly committed conservation partners is a sound strategy that leverages partner strengths to achieve SO results (particularly for IR 1). Using Cooperative Agreements with substantial match ensures the validity and synergy intended by this implementation mechanism.
- Most NGO partnerships, working with beneficiary partners, are achieving required management capacity and implementation and reporting tools and skills to consolidate protection of biodiversity assets within (secure) protected areas, but more unevenly and to a lesser extent in surrounding landscapes. If maintained, these cooperative agreements should be well-placed to increase their efforts to strengthen and transfer capacity to local institutions and beneficiaries of the CARPE support.
- The design does not really give NGOs incentives at the landscape level to expand partnerships to address systemic remotely caused threats. Local staffs reported that it was difficult to act outside landscapes and felt the obligation to spend resources within the landscape. This would include those threats related to difficult policy issues such as inconsistent, overlapping or ambiguous ministerial mandates. Also included are threats where interventions could include such topics as education and communication programs for urban, military and extractive industry populations about bushmeat consumption.
- The absence of sufficient working mechanisms to encourage integration means that effective solutions being applied in one area are not systematically transferred to other circumstances where they would be appropriate.

B. Program Context: Limited USAID presence and the Continuing Appropriateness of Design Assumptions

The initial design includes assumptions that:

³⁶ In places ongoing population-environment dynamic may lead locally to increased near-term forest loss before it is stabilized. It is likely, but difficult to document, that such increases would be less than if CARPE were not present. In other locations CARPE is literally stabilizing and even reversing forest loss. Forest cover is being measured; better local management is beginning to take place which may also result in improved habitat quality within forests. Local SOF monitoring for CBFP-COMIFAC reporting should capture change not picked up by remote sensing methods.

- The stability of Central African governments will increase;
- The global timber trade will be increasingly subject to objective monitoring and scrutiny, thus making local enforcement more realistic;
- International agreements regarding payments to forest-rich countries for forest conservation related to the Climate Change Convention will lead to opportunities for capitalizing environmental services;
- Population growth in Central Africa will stabilize before pressures on rural resources make the CARPE SO unattainable.

Additional critical assumptions that are associated with CARPE's longer term goal and to certain design decisions include:

- Violent conflict will be controlled and prevented;
- Governments in the region will become more democratic and transparent; and,
- Corruption will be controlled and reduced. This has not taken place, and it is clearly beyond the manageable interest of CARPE, though in certain instances the program contributes locally to reducing corruption.

In large measure, these design assumptions were valid and remain so. Some have yet to come into play in any immediate way, such as changes in population dynamics or even the potential for monetizing environmental services functions in landscapes. In practice change takes place relatively slowly and unevenly across the region. The key development over the course of CARPE II's implementation has indeed been the increase in stability of governments and, despite remaining conflict areas, the reduction and prevention of violent conflict.

A key assumption is that unsustainable forest exploitation can be regulated through policy, public-private partnerships, monitoring and enforcement and market demand for certified product. Any follow-on needs to examine the demand side, as not all international suppliers to final markets appear to adhere to international standards at this point. GFW and other partners press for this scrutiny and several logging companies move toward certification and more widely, towards legality. Market forces continue to induce illegal, unsustainable logging, despite consumer control in some, mostly European and US, markets and evolving ITTO standards.

Governance and corruption remain intractable issues that hamper the program and imperil the lives of local ecoguards. The governance component was limited in scope but revealing. As discussed the GFW shows promise and partnership with larger operators can pressure local officials to be more accountable. Nonetheless, transparency issues remain problematic, though governance work suggests that these can be addressed at a variety of levels. Since CARPE II got underway, substantive advances in COMIFAC and increased involvement of other donors suggest that improvements in governance, corruption and accountability can be influenced even with a relatively small CARPE investment.

The development context continues to evolve. The persistence of armed conflict is becoming more sporadic and localized. The Congo Basin countries, while still suffering varying degrees of upheaval, have become somewhat more stable over the past three years. Increasingly, development and conservation agencies are moving into both central government and the rural environment. Governments are reestablishing linkages between central ministries and field forest and park service operations. Facilitation of the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership has shifted from the Americans to the French. Substantial sums of other donor money is pouring into the forestry and protected areas programs both at central and at field levels. New or stronger

government institutions are being developed. Enabling legislation and policies are being adopted and to some extent implemented.

The design assumed that NGOs were the only realistic partner to implement conservation in such a troubled and difficult region. Increased peace in the region has favored progress in the planning and management of parks and landscapes. Park staffs have remained in place and the WCS model of scaling back to, or starting with a few low-key research activities, has proven to be quite effective. Conservation NGOs have been able to build up operations as stability increases. In at least one case an NGO has stockpiled building materials in anticipation of fragility being reduced through disarmament efforts of the United Nations. NGO partnerships should remain the primary means of program implementation. The nature of the LS partnerships should reflect changing circumstances, including the possibility that USAID's relative share of funding for individual landscapes will decrease. With various levels of USG involvement, especially in the early stages of CARPE II, the program has proven that it can operate absent strong traditional USAID Mission presence. The partnership mechanism has served to bring in international resources such as ITTO support to the GFW. However, the implicit assumption that this implementation support would translate toward building a constituency in national governments and institutions depended on State Department and other US agencies reinforcing the CARPE presence. This appears to have worked in Gabon where there has been adequate attention. As discussed in the management section, the limited support has atrophied, yet need and justification for stronger presence remain.

CARPE's sharing of the central stage with other actors has changed the role of the Implementing NGOs who now provide services to a wider set of funding partners. Implementing NGOs country coordination appeared to be more prominent. The distinction between what was a NGO country program and what was a CARPE country program under a NGO was not always apparent. National NGO programs had minimal visible ties to USAID but were perceived as "WCS", or "WWF" programs and not CARPE/USAID. This has important implications for the CARPE design. For example, significant portions of the new funding are being channeled through the same NGO implementing partners. While the evaluation team did not carry out a thorough assessment of Implementing NGO absorptive capacity, the expanding sources of landscape level funding sources suggests that a rebalancing of CARPE funds between landscapes and other functions is possible (without reducing progress taking place in the landscapes). Careful rebalancing would not necessarily undercut the landscape level impact of the program.

Conclusions:

- The lack of USAID presence has been insufficiently bolstered, except in Cameroon and to some extent Gabon, by other CARPE/CBFP resources such as a State Department Regional Environment Officer, the focal points and Washington based partners. Where it has received adequate attention, the basic design for working in non-presence countries appears sound.
- With the expansion of CBFP partnership and the COMIFAC effort to harmonize forest conservation approaches, CARPE has proven to be an effective design for advancing the protection of core biodiversity assets across the region. CARPE needs to increase resources to cross-landscape, system-wide, and regional concerns especially as other donor funds become more available at the field level/within landscapes.
- In highly conflicted areas, the CARPE program has proven capable of sustaining a minimal conservation presence and limited program, which enables rapid reestablishment and rollout when conditions improve.

C. Present Program Balance with Strong Reliance on the Landscape Approach

Throughout this assessment, the team has drawn attention to the advantages and limitations of the landscape approach in terms of program performance and management. As a design approach, obvious strengths include identifying high priority conservation targets and supporting adequate habitat conservation needs. Landscapes, as a foundation for program organization, have served to focus and channel program efforts and to respond to the imperative of concentrating implementation effort at the field level. Landscapes also provide an effective mechanism by which conservation programs can be understood to extend beyond formal protected area boundaries. Habitat and key biodiversity assets can be protected through state owned and formally gazetted administrative units such as wildlife reserves and national parks, through community reserves, within forest and mining concessions and elsewhere. CARPE appears successful in elevating this understanding to the region and amongst other CBFP partners.

CARPE's design established landscapes as science-based spatial units into which funding would be channeled; in practice knowledge at the time was incomplete and the approach and links to funds were unnecessarily rigid. Landscape boundaries required flexibility as demonstrated by implementing NGOs during implementation. Important issues such as conservation priorities outside the twelve landscapes, and non-location specific themes such as conservation education and awareness, policy and governance, intersectoral integration, can only be addressed with a more flexible approach to defining intervention areas. New protected areas are being established in the Basin. Critical habitat and species populations are being identified outside and between protected areas. The science underlying the original definition of the landscapes continues to expand. Current landscape boundaries as hard and fast lines on a map are becoming constraining at times and not enabling towards a threats approach to conservation. As discussed in Chapter 1, geographic and funding flexibility are being sought and applied under the current design. NGO staff expressed a desire for greater flexibility but felt home office commitment to landscape funding was narrowly defined and overly limiting.

Designing CARPE around landscapes also introduces ambiguity. The landscape approach to conservation and the challenges to protecting landscapes are relatively recent and experimental. Landscapes are understood by various parties as natural areas, as cultural areas, as ecological units regrouping overlapping ecosystems, as multi-layered mapping units and, vernacularly, as scenic areas. Each of these dimensions found expression under the CARPE umbrella. Interestingly, local counterparts and administrators tended not to translate the word "landscape" since the notion of an "*approche paysage*" struck them as colloquial and insufficiently rigorous. Not only is there no translation but there is no natural counterpart to the CARPE Landscape Leader and landscapes do not correspond to administrative mandates of any single ministry or authority. In some measure, the foreignness of the concept is linked to difficulty of host country governments in understanding CARPE's support. Land use planning in CARPE is directly related to the landscape unit. CARPE landscapes as geographic units do not generally correspond to territorial, local government administrative or line ministry management units. Planning needs and efforts are not yet fully sensitive to this disconnect and to the complexity of administrative, technical, governance and citizen stakeholder interests. In some of the older landscapes Dzangha-Sangha and the Virungas landscape level coordination by national and international institutions has progressed further, but even these tend to be centered on protected areas and more immediate buffer zones.

The design calls for preparing and implementing landscape plans following an integrated land use planning process. This assessment found no consistent understanding of what this would mean and how to achieve it. The focus on mapping and zoning in the convening process moved the landscape partners forward under a common agenda, but the implementation roadmap is far less clear. There is general agreement on the need to

identify and map critical habitat and threatened species, to identify buffer zones, corridors, special use zones, areas of human activity and related threats. Integrating a conservation agenda with customary use, local governance, and territorial administration and competing interests such as agriculture and extractive industries is proceeding, sometimes quite innovatively, but without a “CARPE vision” or clear design blueprint. Since there is no clear local administrative counterpart for the landscape, local authorities become involved but more in support roles to project directed interventions. The issue of overlapping mandates and appropriate levels of involvement is one that CARPE will need to address as part of its follow-on redesign. In neighboring Uganda, where a landscape approach was attempted, it was discovered that protected areas annual planning and budgeting were offset several months from that of the local administrative Districts, where local environmental planning was situated and being mainstreamed. Moreover, protected area and local authorities had no provision for travel and meeting with one another to deal with “landscape level” issues. In another part of the world, WCS conclusions for the Amazon-Andes program that, “the issue of how to succeed at individual landscapes, and how to alter the status quo for the conservation of nature while reconciling critical human needs, remain largely unresolved” seems even more valid in Central Africa where institutions are weaker; however, lessons from that program, from AWF Heartland program, from WRI’s governance work, from IUCN Category V management guidelines and elsewhere should prove useful.

A major issue in CARPE is not so much that the landscape approach is a work in progress but that other program components are proportionally under financed. With its emphasis on implementing within individual landscapes, the current design does not encourage a CARPE-wide approach to cross-cutting issues. Landscape partners tend to be internally focused and do not seek general lessons and solutions. Governance lessons from WRI’s work in Cameroon, the IMAP tool for bushmeat monitoring, and forest service models for multi-use planning are inadequately shared and built upon to improve the enabling environment. Significant landscape specific successes such as land use agreements in the Okapi reserve, cooperation with forest concessions in ROC, and public-private partnership formation tend to remain bound within a given landscape’s specific approach, rather than accepted models for replication across the program.

Roles and coordination of country programs with landscapes have not fully evolved in part because resources for project management, for focal points, for cross-cutting partners, and for NGO funds expenditure outside of landscapes were insufficient or unavailable.

Conclusions:

- “Landscape” has succeeded as a conceptual approach by shifting attention from a nearly exclusive focus on parks (and protected areas), but it has built limited local buy-in. In spatial terms, landscapes are project units and do not correspond to existing administrative planning units. Landscapes include government domains such as parks and forest reserves, as well as administrative areas such as provinces, districts, arrondissements where local environmental governance structures need to be more fully recognized and developed. Widespread sharing of lessons should assist a future design.
- Landscape leaders and partners need to develop appropriate mandates and links with institutions beyond the parks and forest departments, to appropriately support local governance. This can be done by balancing landscape with other elements of a conservation program. The overall landscape land use plan could develop into an umbrella or framework plan for conservation (i.e. a Conservation Action Plan), that would support landscape leaders and teams to serve as a catalyst in mainstreaming conservation actions into a variety of other sectors (e.g. health, education, tourism) and into administrative plans (e.g. District Environmental Plans), leaving direct implementation (and the need for detailed land use management planning and implementation) only to those activities that directly mitigate the most pressing critical threats to biological diversity within the landscape.

- A variety of conservation strategies is being used to address threat-based challenges. Different NGO partners are developing and field-testing a wide range of innovative models. These models push the limits of implementing recent enabling legislation and, with continued refinement, are on track to provide a sound basis for conservation management beyond CARPE's anticipated duration; however, CARPE will need to play an active role in identifying cross-cutting issues that affect the environment for landscape level performance.
- CBFP's success in catalyzing institutional support, coupled with continued CARPE work should lead to solidly established reserves, communities actively involved in policing themselves, zoning in place and conservation related laws being applied locally; and wildlife, timber, and fisheries increasingly managed under local institutions. However, program balance does not yet adequately address broader issues of program financial and institutional sustainability.

D. Adequacy of approach for building local conservation capacity

Several key design issues have limited the capacity of CARPE II to efficiently begin to address capacity building needs in the program area.

Problems with the small grant mechanism: A core mechanism for building local capacity is the small grants mechanism: As discussed, the impact of small grants has been limited.. The design concept of small grants shows promise as illustrated by CARPE I, the few CARPE II small grants, internal grants by CARPE partner match funds and some current foundation, private sector, and USFWS grants. The current round of CARPE grants can reasonably be expected to have a similar, commensurate impact. The inability to broadly implement the grants program was a design problem; the current shift of the grant making function to landscape leads is an imperfect compromise. Despite effort to provide umbrella guidance (such a through the small grants manual), criteria for selection and eligibility vary from country to country. To some extent the lacunae due to a virtually non-existent CARPE grant program has been partially offset by the presence of other grant-making organizations and the use of matching funds. USFWS notably has strong ties in the region and is able to support its grant-making with careful consideration for capacity-building. Since funds are not earmarked for the CARPE/CBPF regions, Implementing NGOs will need to proactively seek this growing source of funds. The CARPE I evaluation recommended that stronger ties be developed between local NGO and the implementing NGOs and that grant-making be used at least initially to achieve these linkages. There was some evidence that CARPE was attempting to carry through on this recommendation. WWF was supporting a small local NGO in Gabon's Gamba Complex that was building conservation commitment from the youth up, but this group was not yet receiving CARPE II grant funds. AWF reports promising potential to strengthen local capacity resulting from its use of small grants in the Maringa Lopori Wamba landscape. As the grant management function is placed in the hands of the NGO country programs, it appears to be losing its USAID origin and identity. For example, no efforts to promote USAID branding policy to differentiate these small grants from others were observed.

Need to broaden capacity building beyond the landscapes: Some critical resources and threats lie outside core PAs and their immediate environs, and frequently outside landscapes. Landscape leaders and partners lack mandates to intervene directly and have petitioned to adjust boundaries. In at least five landscapes the NGO leads and partners have either modified existing landscape boundaries or used non-CARPE funds to involve populations or address threats outside the formal landscape boundaries. CARPE's implementing partners have generally interpreted the capacity building mandate as applying to the sub-landscape level. Most of the local NGOs being strengthened are very small in scale, frequently consisting of or revolving around a single individual or they are more Community Based Organizations. While these local actors are essential and valuable to the program and program objectives, larger scale organizations will need to be

identified and strengthened more systematically if capacity building and sustainability are to achieve the geographic coverage required by the program. Implementing NGOs sometimes state that larger NGOs mostly do not exist and therefore invest in developing national and regional human resource capacities within their own organizations. Notable efforts to go beyond internal strengthening do exist. The DFGFI program in the Tayna area of Eastern Congo is assisting the creation and establishment of a second or federation level of local organizations, UGADEC that addresses local themes at the level of landscape governance. CEFDHAC committees also suggest that CARPE can build capacity under the design.

Also, Natural resource and environmental management are not often being linked to active governance programs in the countries. For example, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) activities are being considered for the Ituri landscape. Implementing NGOs are beginning to recognize that capacity building grants need to address non-landscape level activities. WWF in Gabon for example is soliciting at least one national level organization to receive funding under the current grants program. However, CARPE's design and implementation directs grants primarily to IR 1 and not to the policy and monitoring areas covered under IRs 2 and 3.

Limited funding for the cross-cutters: The core design mechanism intended to address capacity at this larger scale took the form of thematic cross-cutting implementing partners. A group of mostly USG organizations including USFS, USFWS, USNPS, Smithsonian Institution, and NASA was complemented by World Resources Institute, University of Maryland, IUCN and CIFOR to create a "marketplace" of cross-cutting support functions. These were to complement the NGO capacities within landscapes and to cover issues of a more general nature such as forest monitoring, policy and governance and research. Additionally, the CA mechanism was designed for CARPE to benefit from capacities that the implementing NGO country and international expertise could bring in to complement CARPE funded landscape teams. Preceding sections have described how this arrangement proved to be difficult to make work in practice.

As regional themes defined through COMIFAC's Plan de Convergence gain attention and prominence, implementing NGOs and others have responded by increasing the commitment to national and international efforts in such thematic areas as conservation education and ecological monitoring. The State of the Forest effort is an example of this integration. Some of the so-called crosscutters have also responded. NASA/UMD has placed a fulltime person in the field, USFWS and WRI combined forces to develop a bushmeat monitoring tool. The GFW has improved landscape performance in areas that it has been able to cover. In ROC, WCS has linked its separate landscape programs to create more of a national program. While apparently quite successful, the strategy represents an evolution in the landscape-based strategy of CARPE.

Although the design attempted to provide for these functions, these growing national and regional efforts seem to be taking place despite the current design not because of it. CARPE funding through WRI, IUCN, CEFDHAC, CIFOR and other cross-cutters has simply been inadequate to expect these functions to have been fulfilled.

Conclusions:

- The mix of NGOs and federal agency service providers has not effectively addressed the capacity building objective. NGOs have strengthened park management and surveillance capacity, but impact on CBOs and local NGOs has been much less effective and pervasive. Federal agency capacity-building efforts have been too sporadic (lacking continued follow-up) and limited in scope to have made broad program impact. The Forest Service appears to having some program impact, but this is more on NGO's capacity for multi-use zoning and planning than on key national partners such as Water and Forest Departments or National Park Services

- The small grants program appears to be the victim of inadequate design and, as a result, has to date, with a scant few exceptions, failed to build local capacity, despite its promise and potential. It should be resituated in a new design as indicated in other sections of this document.
- A grant-making function that is directly and visibly tied to USAID and CARPE presence is needed both to raise local capacity and to ensure that the broader understanding of USAID's program wide agenda.

Summary Conclusions

- The evolving context of greater donor support and stronger national and regional programs implies that CARPE can also address issues appropriately at these levels.
- CARPE can better target interventions both within landscapes and at higher levels.
- The landscape boundaries are technically in need of update and a more dynamic approach as knowledge of the basin's ecology expands.
- Landscape leads are sometimes unable to create harmony among implementing partners within a landscape. Even if they were able to do so, landscapes are not nor should they become administrative units for formal land use and territorial planning which include various park and protected area administrations, concessions, local government units, indigenous territories and more recently community reserves.
- The small grants program is a key tool for supporting capacity building for sustainability. To make it work as such a specialized capacity building function needs to be created to allocate funds across the program.
- Financial sustainability cannot be expected at this time but Implementing NGOs clearly need to be operating with institutional development plans that include a continuing reduction in the need for their presence.

V. Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

CARPE and the CBFP are audacious concepts. The very idea of mounting a program to conserve and develop 36% of the area of the huge Congo Basin is itself astounding. The program is also extraordinary in terms of: a) the number of counties included (9), the number of landscapes (11), the relative novelty of the basic program concept (working in landscapes), the remoteness of most of the program landscapes, the recent history of conflict in the region, and very limited capacity of both host governments and the region's human resource base. Given these conditions, the program concept could have been assessed by outsiders as a recipe for disaster.

Despite these constraints, this assessment has concluded that after only three short years, CARPE has been surprisingly successful in moving towards achievement of long-term program objectives. The USAID CTO has done an exceptional job of turning a vague concept into a program with clear objectives and the means of monitoring progress towards those objectives. Through the dedication and hard work of CARPE partners, it appears that CARPE is on track to achieve its intermediate results.

Nevertheless, the program is bedeviled by some significant problems that need resolution. This chapter sets forward six major programmatic recommendations and then provides recommendations for resolution of the most significant CARPE II issues that flow from the analyses in the three previous chapters. In some cases several program options are presented in order to encourage further discussion and more in-depth analysis by USAID and the partners, especially because the assessment team did not have time to review in depth all of the elements of this complex program. It is anticipated that these recommendations will prove useful to the team that will soon assist the CARPE CTO team in designing the next phase of the CARPE II program. Finally, no specific procurement recommendations will be included here, due to USAID regulations.

Programmatic Recommendations

- Improve program balance by focusing more attention and resources to IRs 2 and 3 and program management. With the experience of the past three years, funding can be allocated much more efficiently than the artificial proportional limitations established when CARPE II was initiated.
- Strive to link landscape programs more closely to existing governance structures and increase host country participation in program decision making. The weakness of host government and even local citizen support for the landscape programs is CARPE II's Achilles heel that needs to be addressed.
- Diversify the skill base of CARPE partners working in landscapes to ensure that livelihood needs, as well as conservation threats, are addressed in a way that builds a local constituency for conservation. The teaming agreements for the landscapes need to provide a greater diversity of talents during the remainder of CARPE II.
- Gradually focus less attention on Protected Areas in landscapes and place growing attention on addressing threats and opportunities in forest concessions and with communities. Placing priority attention on PAs was an appropriate strategy for the initial phase of CARPE II, but cannot remain the center of attention in the next phase if CARPE's landscape goals are to be attained.
- Reinvigorate the USG financial commitment to CBFP and back that commitment with increased staff attention to basin-wide and national policy issues. The USG should continue to provide leadership for this program by announcing a continued USG commitment to CBFP of at least \$15 million/year (ideally more) through 2015. Just as importantly, the State Department and USAID can build on the initial success of the CBFP with some modest increases in staffing and active involvement in key policy issues.
- Increase emphasis on country-level and basin-wide coordination (country teams, prioritization of non-landscape activities), while at the same time reducing the isolation of landscape programs and improving opportunities for inter-landscape learning from successful models. A new CARPE support contract is recommended to support this effort.

Tighten program focus

- Tighten the focus CARPE activities on those programmatic or spatial landscape activities that will most directly reduce identified threats. The completion of biodiversity and socio-economic analyses coupled with several years of on-the-ground experience should enable landscape partners to identify the key threats and focus their work plans on addressing those threats.
- Know when to declare victory and move on. Establish a common set of program components, best practice guidelines and standard measures of success for work in PAs, forest concessions, CBNRM and bushmeat. (E.g. use the World Bank/WWF toolkit to measure success in National Parks).
- Leverage recent CBFP partner contributions to selectively and efficiently limit unnecessary use of USAID funds. Many donor programs have started since CARPE II was designed. The design team should recalibrate the program now to rely on new CBFP partners to provide leadership for program areas that do not fit the comparative advantages of USAID and implementing NGOs (national policy, strengthening of national park services), while complementing these efforts from the landscape perspective (e.g. policy execution and feedback).
- Designate federal agency involvement in the follow-on design to areas where they have a proven comparative advantage for work in the region (USFS for multiple use planning, NASA/UMD for remote sensing technology).

Improve landscape performance

CARPE should continue to use and promote a landscape approach, but it should place less emphasis on the concept of “landscapes” as territorial units. Boundaries should be flexible to accommodate the wisdom of on the ground implementation. New design should reflect adjustments to date, and landscape boundaries should be marked in dashed, not solid, lines on future maps. Implementing NGOs should have the flexibility to allocate funds outside of landscape boundaries, in ways that support the core conservation objectives of the landscape approach. Implementing NGOs should attempt to integrate landscape planning with existing formal territorial and cadastral plans and other regional and administrative plans.

Continue working through implementing NGOs as the primary means to anchor the CARPE program, but adjust grant mechanisms to encourage more synergistic consortia that better integrate a range of the relative strengths of a wider range of partners. Implementing NGOs will need to construct teams or co-funding arrangements (e.g. WWF with GTZ) with increased capacity in management, forestry, improving livelihoods, local governance and, sometimes, to help attenuate security or stability issues.

Allocation of landscape funds:

Option a: All landscape funding should be funneled through the landscape leader. To eliminate double overheads, implementing NGOs would need to accept that these funds would be subcontracted or sub-granted to other Implementing NGOs with no or low overhead charges. Exceptions would be made on a case-by-case basis, primarily when Trans-boundary landscapes do not lend themselves to meaningful joint planning and when threats can be isolated and addressed without unnecessary administrative and management overhead.

Option b: Maintain the present system of unbundled funding for segment leads, but increase the formal authority of landscape leads to approve/disapprove annual plans and budgets.

USAID and the NGO Landscape lead organizations should develop a clearly defined Scope of Work (SOW) for the LS leadership role, detailing responsibilities to orchestrate management plan preparation, review progress, and coordinate reporting. Future RFAs or other solicitations should require applicants to develop a clear SOW for every major partner organization, and should require applicants to demonstrate that the proposed partners have the specific capability and experience to carry out their intended role and responsibilities. Ideally, landscape leads would have good management skills, or should receive increased management support from their organization’s regional staff for sub-contract management, and resolving conflicts with partners.

Prioritize and make better use of Cross-Cutting program components

Four major cross-cutting issues that have the most potential to contribute to the strategic objective and program results and are within the comparative advantage of CARPE partners are: a) Capacity Building, b) Policy and governance c) Bushmeat, and d) Remote Sensing Technology for natural resource monitoring. Lead partners should be clearly identified for each of these issues in the next phase of CARPE procurement. The cross-cutting leads would be primarily responsible for recommending and sometimes executing CARPE-funded activities outside of landscapes, providing guidance but not funding within landscapes, and coordinating CARPE reporting. In each case, a CARPE II agenda (e.g. policy agenda, capacity building agenda) should be developed and clearly communicated to all CARPE partners. Recommendations for each of these four cross-cutting components follow:

Capacity Building: Establish a CARPE capacity building agenda with priorities that complement those of other CBFP donors. Capacity building activities within landscapes should continue to be prioritized and funded as part of landscape planning exercises. The focus of this capacity building should probably

include continued strengthening and expansion of PA leadership and senior staff, reinforcement of decentralized administration of natural resources, environmental education and building local constituencies for improved natural resource management, and building local NGO capacity (in CBOs and 2nd level organizations such as UGADEC). Capacity building activities outside of landscapes should be prioritized and funded via the new CARPE central support contract and/or via other partners. The focus of this capacity building should probably include: strengthening civil society institutions, policy, NRM, timber certification and controlling illegal logging; remote sensing and GIS technology. Finally, CARPE can perform a valuable service by fostering basin-wide networks of protected area managers (such as RAPAC), CBNRM leaders and conservation advocacy groups.

Policy: The USG should be a key actor in influencing conservation-related policy issues in the Congo Basin working primarily via the US Embassies, the CARPE CTO and the focal points. USG influence will be most effective when coordinated with CARPE partners. Also, individual CARPE partners should continue to influence policy issues through their institutional structures. The CARPE country teams and the SO team leader should coordinate the development of a policy agenda for the remaining years of CARPE II with assistance, as needed, from the CARPE support contractor.

CARPE's primary roles related to policy should be based on its comparative advantages and primary focus on achieving results in landscapes:

1. Establishing models for how policies can be executed in the field (community reserves, tourism sites, concession agreements, alternatives to bushmeat, green mining, artisan logging, local hunting rights, etc.).
2. Supporting the execution of policies in the landscapes, including enforcement of laws, and prosecution of illegal activities;
3. Providing feedback to national institutions and donors on how well policies are being implemented and the effectiveness of these policies.
4. Encouraging transparency and effective local governance in/around landscapes, perhaps by using landscapes as "good governance zones."

Bushmeat: While there is a need for a systematic approach to compiling the data on the growing bushmeat problem and using it to push for stronger enforcement of existing laws, CARPE should apply more resources to using the information about bushmeat hunting and trade to develop interventions to reduce or control the threat to wildlife. Bushmeat strategies should be integrated with other programs and economic development sectors such as poverty reduction, livelihoods, mining, and health. Income generating or enterprise development projects that provide alternatives to bushmeat for local livelihoods should be promoted. In conflict and fragile areas, CARPE should link bushmeat traffic with transparency, conflict resolution, anti-corruption and other transitional or peace related interventions supported by ESF funds or other sources.

NRM/Remote Sensing: Applied use of remote sensing data and GIS tools should be more widely put into practice by CARPE partners for zoning and land use planning. Training in the use of remote sensing data and GIS is a high priority for capacity building efforts. CARPE should explore mechanisms to support other donors' investments at the national and regional level to increase broad NRM capacity and leadership. CARPE can link measurement of forest degradation to policy advocacy by making data available through GFW and other shared datasets, and by developing interactive forestry atlases in other countries.

Increase impact of the small grants program: CARPE should continue to support a small grant program in each country focused on strengthening the institutional capacity of NGOs and CBOs at both the national and landscape levels and on supporting IR2 and IR3 objectives. The grants could be funded either by USAID or by using matching funds, if other sources of funds can be utilized more efficiently than USAID funds. If USAID funds are used, the approval process should be streamlined and clarified, so that implementing organizations can easily follow USAID guidance, and the CARPE CTO need not review and authorize each grant.

Improved program management

Reduce and better distribute the program's management burden. The CARPE management burden is unusually heavy and the CARPE SO team's capacity is limited and too dependent on one person.

- Bolster the USAID/CARPE staff in Kinshasa. The CARPE headquarter staff is too thin. The CTO should formulate a new staffing plan for the remainder of CARPE II which establishes additional full time positions and ensures that HQ staff are not dependent on interns or other temporary employees. The arbitrary cap placed on management expenses was unrealistic and should be eliminated.
- Strive to reduce the number of management decisions that must be made by the CARPE SO team: e.g. approval of small grants, reduction in the number of landscape segments.
- Place more management responsibility on the implementing NGOs. Consider allowing implementing NGOs increased flexibility to move CARPE funds between landscapes in a country based on available funding levels and program priorities within the country.
- Establish a CARPE support contract (new mechanism) that will increase capacity to manage the focal point and small grant programs, coordinate CARPE country-team planning, provide venues for country and regional exchange of lessons learned and successful models, coordinate and help implement non-landscape capacity building and policy activities, and perhaps assist the CARPE SO team in program reporting.
- Make the Focal Points more effective elements of the USAID management team: CARPE management should fully review a set of focal point options regarding: a) definition of essential tasks during the remainder of CARPE II; b) the most appropriate administrative "home" for focal points; c) in which countries focal points are truly needed; and d) the staffing and overall cost of the focal point program. The assessment team believes that full time focal points may only be needed in DRC, Gabon, and ROC; that a non-NGO administrative home needs to be found; that the present focal point structure of 3 people in each focal point office may be excessive, and that the priority tasks for focal points are those mentioned in chapter 2.
- Develop a broader communication strategy, with a more systematic approach to communication, information dissemination, outreach, and public media messages to targeted audiences. This strategy could be implemented within the CBFP framework, possibly through the proposed CARPE support contract. It is especially important that CARPE partners communicate a consistent message about conservation priorities and approaches to government partners and regional organizations. Develop means to share models across the program and to create best practices guidelines in a user friendly format.

Program funding and USG support

Reinvigorate the USG commitment and level of support to CBFP and CARPE objectives. Support to CBFP and CARPE is harmonious with broader USG and European goals of democratization and development in the region. Announce a continued USG commitment to CBFP through 2015 with annual funding levels at least as high as during the previous four years (\$15 million/year). CARPE is an extraordinarily broad and ambitious program that could absorb much more than the funding presently available for it. A minimum of

\$15 million/year will be needed through 2011, if CARPE is to have an opportunity to meet its Phase II objectives.

If funding declines, the criteria for prioritizing landscape activities should include:

- Success in achieving program objectives
- Relative degree of vulnerability and irreplaceability of biodiversity
- Modest pipeline
- Declining need due to program maturity
- Assumed funding from other sources

Increase USG staff and program support for the region:

- Establish a new OES position for central Africa (only).
- Revitalize and broaden support for CBFP/CARPE, by creating a new Washington-based coordination body that includes all CARPE partners and reaches out to other potential partners
- Establish a more visible USG/USAID identification (branding) that will normally be used for CARPE-funded activities and commodities.

Develop a more precise approach to balancing conservation and development activities in landscapes

Possible options:

- Require landscape leaders in the RFA response to a) analyze development needs in their landscape; b) identify development partners; and c) indicate a level of funding and a development approach needed to address the most critical needs and alleviate threats to long-term conservation. A floor of 5 or 10% funding for development might be required by USAID.
- Announce the establishment of a second “development window” in the CBFP. Encourage donors to provide and implementing NGOs to search for development funding (matching funds or co-financing agreements with donors) to complement conservation funding in landscapes. This approach leaves development to the development specialists, and follows the approach of WWF’s partnering with GTZ in Cameroon and CAR and USAID/Kinshasa’s funding for Lac Thumba.
- USAID/DRC and USAID/Rwanda, as well as the CARPE CTO should explore opportunities to access central and regionally-funded USAID programs (e.g. the Population-Health-Environment initiative; Office of Conflict Mitigation resources, FFP resources, Office of Energy resources) to supplement mission bilaterally-funded development activities in CARPE landscapes.
- Work closely with the Washington CARPE team to identify and help channel other resources to the CARPE (and CBFP) effort. For example, USFWS has resources independent of those deriving from former CARPE monies that could be tapped by Congo Basin conservation entities.

Improve CARPE relationships with national governments, many of whom do not appreciate CARPE and could limit its future success

- Prior to the end of the current phase, CARPE should organize seminars in each country to present program accomplishments to national government partners and other stakeholders. This should also be an opportunity to get their input and buy-in on the next phase priorities, work plans, and strategies to combat the major threats in each landscape.
- For the remainder of CARPE II a) establish a clearly defined role for local government officials in annual activity planning in landscapes and b) establish a clearly defined role for national government officials in approving an annual set of CARPE activities within each country. Annual activity planning in landscapes, led by the landscape leader and his/her government counterpart, might culminate in a national “Comite Executif” meeting where a) all activity plans for landscapes would be ratified or modified as needed, b) some non-landscape activities would be added to the proposed

CARPE program and c) the annual CARPE program would be ratified by national-level government officials and partners alike, prior to submission to the CARPE SO team for approval. The CARPE focal point would attend planning meetings in each landscape and would organize and manage the Comité Executif sessions, probably in April/May of each year.

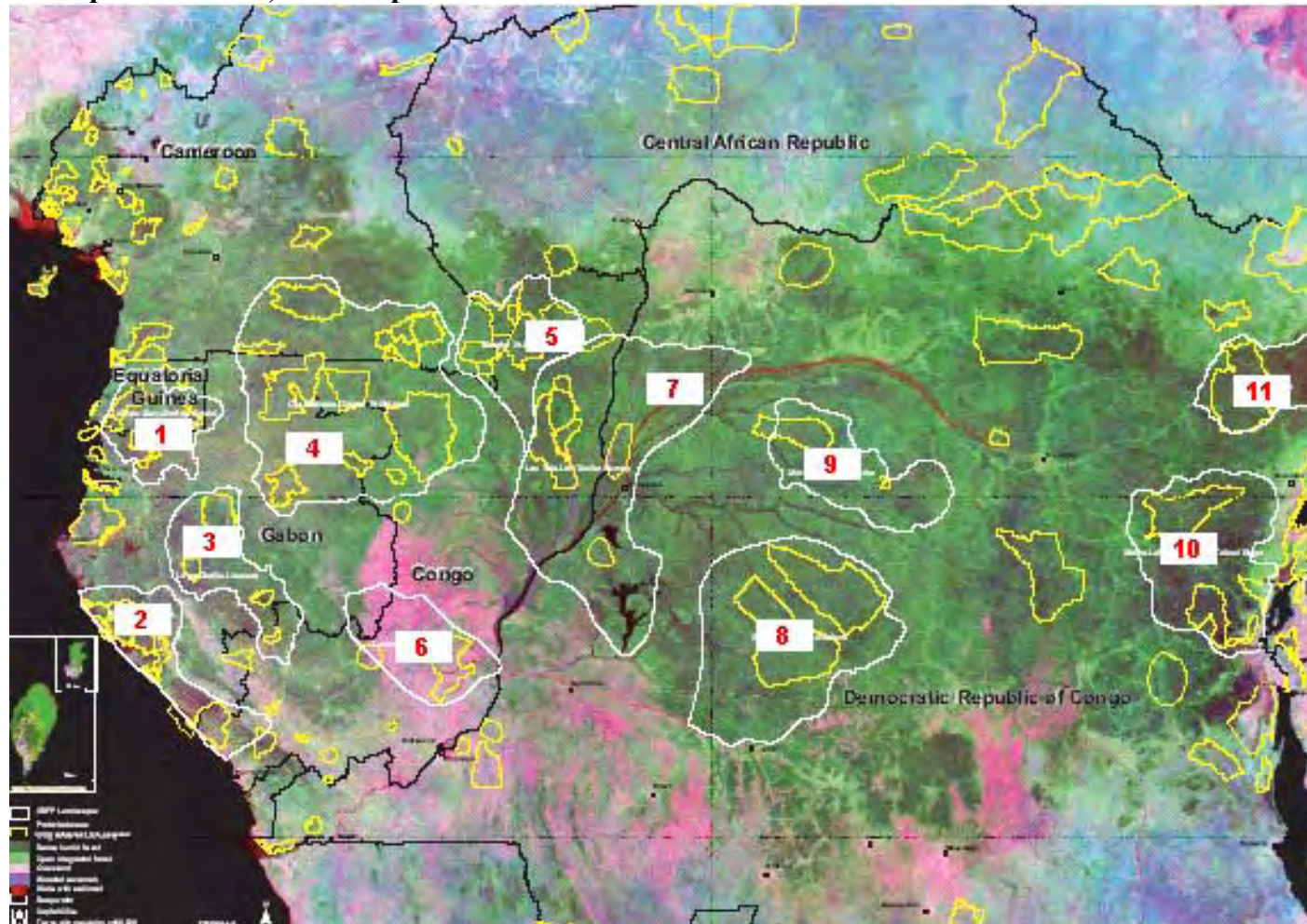
- Make communication and coordination with national governments the primary task of re-invigorated Focal Points.
- Clarify to all partners the kinds of direct and indirect assistance that CARPE can legally provide to national government entities. Provide a written summary of this CARPE assistance at least annually to key government officials.
- Urge implementing NGOs and other partners to document their CARPE-related assistance to all government entities (including assistance financed by matching funds) and to provide this documentation to governments at least annually.

Recognize and plan for a long term need to achieve program sustainability

- Identify local NGOs, CBOs and CSOs in each landscape and require new procurements to explicitly include capacity development in submissions. This implies an exit or scale down strategy for large international NGO activities and a clear definition of their long-term roles in the region.
- Build capacity of second level local organizations (federations and associations) and larger local NGOs that will be able to perform roles that the current NGO partners presently execute directly.
- Continue to encourage landscape partners to identify diversified funding sources for their programs and for related landscape needs..
- Foster efforts to develop sustainable funding strategies, tools and institutions to complement limited revenues from local sources and to offset reliance on donor funding.

Annexes

Annex A. Carpe II Partners, Landscapes and Activities



Carpe Landscapes

1. Monte Alen - Mont de Cristal Forest
2. Gamba-Conkouati Forest
3. Lope-Chaillu-Louesse Forest
4. Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri-national Forest
5. Sanha Tri-national Forest
6. Leconi-Bateke-Lefini Forest
7. Lac Tele-Lac Tumba Swamp Forest
8. Salonga-Lukenie-Sankuru Forest
9. Maringa-Lopori-Wamba Forest
10. Maiko-Lutunguru Tayna-Kahuzi Biega Forest
11. Ituri-Epulu-Aru Forest
12. Virunga

• . BUDGET BY LANDSCAPE

Ref No.	No. of Segments, leader per segment	Landscapes, Segments, and Sub-Region Partners		Size (ha) and Segment Leaders Receiving Funding	Countries involved & NGOs funded by Seg Leaders	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Landscape Total
1)	2 Segments	Monte Alen - Mont de Cristal Forest LS		2,671,000	Gabon, Eq Guinea				
	Seg 1: CI	EG	Monte Alen NP, Altos de Nsok NP	CI	CI	751,536	271,754	1,723,786	
	Seg 2: WCS	Gabon	Monte de Cristal	WCS	WCS	404,091	223,618	978,614	
	Seg 2: WCS	Gabon	Monte de Cristal	WCS	WWF	95,909	96,467	311,471	3,013,871
2)	2 Segments	Gamba - Konkouati Forest Landscape		3,439,000	Gabon, ROC				
	Seg 1: WWF	Gabon	Gabon - Gamba Conkoati	WWF	CI - special theme	0	0	31,768	
	Seg 1: WWF	Gabon	Gabon - Gamba Conkoati	WWF	WWF	567,180	671,382	1,739,826	
	Seg 1: WWF	Gabon	Gabon - Mayumba & Iguela sector subregion	WWF	WCS	432,820	472,630	1,272,419	
	Seg 2: WCS	ROC	ROC - Conkoati-Douli NP	WCS	WCS	400,081	441,676	1,116,566	4,160,579
3)	1 Segment	Lope - Chaillu - Louesse Forest Landscape		3,494,000	Gabon, ROC				
	LL: WCS		All	WCS	WCS	600,000	590,885	1,735,885	1,735,885
4)	2 Segments	Dja-Minkebe-Odzala Tri-national Forest LS		14,160,000	Cameroon, Gabon, ROC				
	Seg 1: WWF	Gabon	Gabon - Minkebe	WWF	WWF	998,000	473,343	2,399,702	
	Seg 1: WWF	Gabon	Gabon - Ivindo sector subregion	WWF	WCS	252,000	245,687	652,328	
	Seg 2: WCS	ROC	ROC - Odzala	WCS	WWF	204,944	131,426	535,743	
	Seg 2: WCS	ROC	ROC - Odzala	WCS	WCS	295,056	248,217	773,825	
		701	Cameroon - Dja	WWF	WWF		304,057	304,057	4,665,655
5)	2 Segments	Sangha Tri-national Forest Landscape		3,637,000	Cameroon, CAR, ROC				
	Seg 1: WWF	CAM	CAR - Sangha	WWF	WWF	650,000	225,696	1,375,696	
	Seg 1: WWF	ROC	Cameroon - Lobeke	WWF	WWF		249,445	249,445	
	Seg 2: WCS	901	ROC - Ndoki	WCS	WCS	700,474	879,725	2,280,698	3,905,839
6)	1 Segment	Leconi - Bateke - Lefini Forest Landscape		3,532,000	Gabon, ROC				
	LL: WCS	1001	All	WCS	WCS	350,000	413,502	1,106,501	1,106,501
7)	2 Segments	Lac Tele - Lac Tumba Swamp Forest Landscape		12,681,000	ROC, DRC				
	Seg 1: WCS	DRC	ROC - Lac Tele	WCS	WCS	350,144	283,675	933,840	
	Seg 2: WWF	1101	DRC - Lac Tumba	WWF	WWF	650,000	622,813	1,872,814	2,806,654
8)	1 Segment	Salonga - Lukenie - Sankuru Forest Landscape		10,223,000	DRC				
	LL: WWF	DRC	Salonga NP	WWF	WWF	518,800	339,276	1,350,933	
	LL: WWF	DRC	Salonga Lukenie Sankuru	WWF	WCS	331,000	309,739	888,739	2,239,672
9)	1 Segment	Maringa - Lopori - Wamba Forest Landscape		4,223,000	DRC				
	LL: AWF	DRC	Maringa Lopori Wamba (shared area)	AWF	CI	179,976	50,000	380,300	
	LL: AWF	DRC	Maringa Lopori Wamba (shared area)	AWF	AWF	720,024	720,167	2,289,867	2,670,167
10)	1 Segment	Maiko - Lutunguru Tayna - Kahuzi Biega Forest Landscape		3,135,000	DRC				
	LL: CI	DRC	Maiko Tayna NP	CI	CI	997,880	1,106,899	2,804,449	
	LL: CI	DRC	Kahuzi Biega NP	CI	WWF	300,000	338,970	938,970	
	LL: CI	DRC	Kahuzi Biega NP	CI	WCS	360,000	349,341	808,341	4,551,760
11)	1 Segment	Ituri - Epulu - Aru Forest Landscape		6,840,000	DRC				
	LL: WCS	DRC	Ituri Epulu Aru	WCS	WCS	399,738	436,479	1,320,404	1,320,404
12)	1 Segment	Virungas			DRC, Rwanda				
	LL: AWF	RW	DRC/Rwanda - Virunga	AWF	AWF	500,000	211,376	1,211,376	1,211,376

6. CARPE BUDGET BY PARTNER

NGO	Year 1 (operating in FY04)		Year 2 (operating in FY05)		Year 3 (operating in FY06)		TOTAL	
	USAID	Match Funds	USAID	Match Funds	USAID	Match Funds	USAID	Match Funds
African Wildlife Foundation	\$1,349,676	\$286,189	\$1,220,024	\$493,698	\$1,220,167	\$0	\$3,789,867	\$779,887
Conservation International	\$1,582,258	\$892,504	\$1,929,392	\$1,108,213	\$1,984,454	\$1,146,271	\$5,496,104	\$3,146,988
Wildlife Conservation Society	\$4,338,209	\$4,806,330	\$4,875,404	\$5,134,523	\$5,033,689	\$5,959,147	\$14,247,302	\$15,900,000
World Wildlife Fund	\$4,140,950	\$3,220,107	\$4,582,587	\$2,841,331	\$4,910,291	\$3,506,772	\$13,757,226	\$9,568,210
World Resources Institute	\$750,000	\$313,392	\$850,000	\$260,804	\$900,000	\$260,804	\$2,500,000	\$835,000
World Conservation Union (IUCN)	\$75,000		\$175,000		\$75,000		\$325,000	
Smithsonian Institute	\$250,000		\$200,000		\$200,000		\$650,000	
US Fish & Wildlife Service	\$100,000		\$0		\$0		\$100,000	
US Forest Service	\$250,000		\$237,000		\$250,000		\$737,000	
NASA	\$750,000		\$500,000		\$650,000		\$1,900,000	
US National Park Service	\$0		\$50,000		\$50,000		\$100,000	
US Peace Corps	\$50,000		\$0		\$0		\$50,000	
TOTAL USAID							\$43,652,499	
TOTAL MATCH							\$30,230,085	
GRAND TOTAL							\$73,882,584	

Figures in italics Signifies Budget estimates. These partners have one-year agreements, and their future funding levels are negotiable.

Signifies our NGO Landscape Partners. Each NGO has a three-year agreement stipulating the level of USAID and Match funding. Year 3 Match Funding levels are the most conservative estimates, and funding will probably be greater than this amount.

Signifies CARPE NGO Crosscutting Technical Service Partners. Each NGO also has a three year agreement.

Signifies CARPE Federal Agency Partners. These partners also act as cross-cutter technical service providers, and have a series of one-year agreements. FY06 funding levels are not yet finalized, awaiting budget allocation from AFR.

7. ILLUSTRATIVE TABLE OF LEVERAGED FUNDS

Recipient	Total Amount	Time period	Source	Location
AWARDED FROM INTERNATIONAL AND MULTILATERAL SOURCES				
DRC Ministry of Environment	\$3,000,000	3 years	World Bank Loan	DRC
WWF	\$700,000	7 years	UNDP Global Environment Fund	Congo River System
ICCN	\$3,000,000	6 years	UNDP Global Environment Fund	DRC
WWF/WCS	\$10,728,788	6 years	French Global Environment Fund	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
Regional Governments	\$29,120,996	5 years	EU	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
WWF/WCS	\$3,831,710	1 year	German Development Bank	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
WWF	\$10,117,500	7 years	UNDP Global Environment Fund	Tri-DOM (Gabon, Cameroon, ROC)
WCS	\$1,915,855	3 years	French Global Environment Fund	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
				Tri-DOM (Gabon, Cameroon, ROC)
				Gamba (Gabon)
WWF	\$300,000	4 years	UNESCO French Global Environment Fund	Tri-DOM (Gabon, Cameroon, ROC)
WWF	\$1,619,545	4 years	French Global Environment Fund	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
				Tri-DOM (Gabon, Cameroon, ROC)
				Gamba (Gabon)
WWF	\$623,036	2 years	EU	Salonga (DRC)
WWF	\$1,020,001	2 years	EU	Virunga (DRC, Rwanda)
WWF	\$697,680	2 years	UNDP Global Environment Fund	Congo Basin
TOTAL AWARDED, PUBLIC =	\$66,675,111			
AWARDED FROM PRIVATE SECTOR SOURCES				
WCS	\$250,000	1 year	CIB Forestry Concession	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
WCS	\$75,000	1 year	Rougier Forestry Concession	Trinational (Cameroon, CAR, ROC)
Gabon Ministry of Forestry	\$100,000	donation	ESRI Software (USA)	Gabon
WWF	\$250,000	3 years	Shell Gabon	Gabon
CARE	\$100,000	donation	Motorola	Maringa Lopori Wamba (DRC)
TOTAL AWARDED, PRIVATE =	\$775,000			
UNDER DEVELOPMENT				
WWF	\$50,000,000	<i>unknown</i>	Global Environment Facility	Congo Basin
WWF	\$20,000,000	<i>7 years</i>	UNDP Global Environment Facility	Congo Basin
Woodshole Research Center	\$100,000	<i>unknown</i>	NASA	Albertine Rift (DRC, Rwanda, and others)
WWF (<i>proposed</i>)	\$12,000,000	<i>5 years</i>	WB Global Environment Facility	Gabon
TOTAL UNDER DEVELOPMENT =	\$82,100,000			
Total Leveraged Funds currently Awarded =				\$67,450,111
Total Anticipated Leveraged Funds =				\$82,100,000
Total Funds Leveraged by CARPE, Anticipated and Confirmed =				\$149,550,111

LANDSCAPE SEGMENTS AND LEADERS REFERENCE SHEET

Landscape, segment, partner, and country		Name	Email	Telephone	Address
Monte Alen Mont de Cristal					
CI	Eq G, Monte Alen	Christopher Kernan	ckernan@conservation.org	+240203138; +2024316828	INDEFOR, Bata, Eg 1919 m street NW. Washington DC, 20036
WCS	GN, Monte de Cristal	Pauwel de Wachter	Pauwel_dewachter@hotmail.com	+241840034	WWF. BP 9144, Libreville
WWF	GN, Monte de Cristal				
Gamba Conkoati					
WWF	GN, Gamba Conkoati	Bas Huijbregts	Huijbregts_bas@hotmail.com	+241840020	WWF-Gabon. P.O.BOX 9144
WCS	GN, Mayumba & Iguela	Hilde Vanleeuwe	conkouati@uuplus.com ; hvanleeuwe@wcs.org		Libreville
WCS	ROC, Conkoati-Douli				
Lope					
WCS	Gabon/ROC				
TRIDOM					
WWF	GN, Minkebe	Pauwel de Wachter	Pauwel_dewachter@hotmail.com	+241840034	WWF. BP 9144, Libreville
WCS	GN, Ivindo	Pauwel de Wachter Leonard Usongo	Pauwel_dewachter@hotmail.com lusongo@wwfcarpo.org	+241840034	WWF. BP 9144, Libreville
WWF	ROC, Odzala			+241840034	WWF. BP 9144, Libreville
WCS	CAM, Dja			+2372216267	WWF CARPO
TNS					
WWF	CAR, Sangha	Leonard Usongo	lusongo@wwfcarpo.org	+2372216267	
WWF	CAM, Lobeke	Emma Stokes	estokes@wcs.org		
WCS	ROC, Sangha				
Leconi Bateke					
WCS	ROC	Norbert Gami	ngami@wcs.org		
Lac Tele Lac Tumba					
WCS	ROC, Lac Tele	Hugo Rainey	hrainey@wcs.org ; wcslacte@uuplus.com	+24381650176 6	WWF-DRC
WWF	DRC, Lac Tumba	Inogwabini	bin@kinpost.com		
Salonga					
WWF	DRC, Salonga NP	Lisa Steel	lisasteel@gis.net	9896151	WWF-DRC
WCS	DRC, Salonga	Lukenie Sankuru			
Maringa Lopori Wamba					
CI	DRC, MLW	Karl Morrison	kmorrison@conservation.org	97701071	Goma
AWF	DRC, MLW				
Maiko Tayna Kahuzi Biega					
CI	DRC, Maiko Tayna NP	Karl Morrison	kmorrison@conservation.org	97701071	Goma
WWF	DRC, Kahuzi Biega NP				
WCS	DRC, Kahuzi Biega NP				
Ituri Epulu Aru					
WCS	DRC, Ituri Epulu Aru				
Virungas					
AWF	DRC/Rwanda - Virunga				

Annex B. 2002 CARPE II Strategic Plan (partial):

A. Selection of Strategic Objective

CARPE will operate under a stand-alone, regional Strategic Objective in the environment sector of the USAID Africa Bureau, managed from USAID-Democratic Republic of Congo. In support of the broad goals and interests of the U.S. Government, USAID, and the Africa Bureau, CARPE's Strategic Objective will contribute to economic development and the alleviation of poverty throughout Central Africa. This will benefit not only the people and countries of the region, but also U.S. citizens and the global community as well. It will do so by helping to conserve the forests and other biological resources that are essential for economic development in the region. It will also contribute to slowing global climate change and conserving the species and genetic resources of the Congo Basin.

The clearance and degradation of forests in Central Africa leads to a concomitant loss of biological diversity – species, genetic resources, and ecological processes and services. All of these biotic resources can contribute to the sustainable development of the region. The forests and biodiversity of Central Africa are threatened by human factors, choices, practices, decisions, and behaviors – and these threats can only be addressed by improvements in local, national, and regional capacity to manage these resources sustainably, for broad-based benefits to the societies of the region.

Goal: Sustainable natural resource management practiced throughout Central Africa in order to promote sustainable economic development and alleviate poverty for the benefit of people of the region and the global community.

The Strategic Objective of CARPE is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity.

Intermediate Results to be achieved in order to reach this objective will involve implementing sustainable forest and biodiversity management practices, strengthening environmental governance, and monitoring forests and other natural resources throughout the region.

The implementation of more sustainable practices will contribute directly to long-term, broad-based development. The improvements in environmental governance that CARPE will foster will contribute to more general improvements in democratic governance, transparency, accountability, social stability, and reduction in violent conflict in the region as a whole. Monitoring will enable the program to be flexible and manage its activities adaptively in this dynamic region, as well as to demonstrate results on the ground.

B. Planning Process

- An independent evaluation of CARPE's first six years was conducted by the Environment and Development Group in 2001 and the results published in February, 2002 (Environment and Development Group, 2002). The findings of this evaluation, which are included as Annex 6, have informed the process of planning for this new SO.

USAID has consulted widely with a variety of partners in development of the new SO, including with members of the expanded CARPE Strategic Objective Team (CARPESOT), consisting of representatives of all CARPE partner organizations. USAID held several meetings with partners to solicit their individual views in late 2001, the second of which, on October 24, 2001, was facilitated by Price-Waterhouse-Coopers. As a result of these meetings, USAID developed a draft Results Framework, illustrative activities, indicators,

and targets, which were distributed to the CARPESOT prior to a meeting on December 14, 2001. They were discussed at this meeting, but the draft Results Framework was not revised.

Subsequent to the December, 2001 meeting, additional revisions were made to the draft Results Framework as a result of the September 2002 U.S. Government announcement of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Results Framework of this Strategic Plan provides an umbrella for many of the activities the U.S. will undertake in support of its contribution to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. CARPE and the CBFP overlap in substantial ways, but each program proposes some activities that are unique to it. Furthermore, in some cases some activities may be a focus for one of these initiatives but not both.

C. Critical Assumptions and Vulnerabilities

CARPE will operate in a regional context in which factors internal to the region and factors from outside it will influence USAID's ability to achieve the goal, strategic objective, and intermediate results described in this strategic plan. In order to adaptively manage CARPE, several of these key factors will need to be tracked. They include:

- the stability of Central African governments;
- the global timber trade;
- international agreements regarding payments to forest-rich countries for forest conservation related to the Climate Change Convention; and
- population dynamics in Central Africa.

As discussed above in the section on "Conflict Vulnerability," many of the governments in Central Africa have been wracked by civil war and other kinds of violent conflicts over the last several decades. They are in many cases unstable and predisposed to further violent conflict. Over the last seven years CARPE has shown that it can operate in a conflict-prone environment, so the main issue for CARPE in its next phase is to build in mechanisms that can allow it to continue to be resilient and effective despite occasional conflict, and to monitor the stability of the governments in the countries in which it works.

International trade in timber is dynamic and changing. One key issue is the degree to which worldwide timber production is shifting from natural forests to plantations. Another issue is the development of certification mechanisms to link producers and consumers in a system of sustainable forestry. These issues should be followed as CARPE moves forward in its new, regional implementation phase.

Developments in the Convention on Climate Change, in particular the market mechanisms and incentives for forest conservation that may eventually be developed based on the Kyoto Protocol, are a part of the context for CARPE, and should be tracked as the program moves ahead.

Finally, population dynamics in Central Africa -- including population growth rates, rural-urban migration patterns, and large-scale migrations or refugee flows -- is an issue that could influence whether or not this CARPE strategic plan can succeed. Population dynamics should therefore be monitored in a general way throughout the project.

Critical assumptions are that, in general:

- Violent conflict will be controlled and prevented;
- Governments in the region will become more democratic and transparent; and
- Corruption will be controlled and reduced.

D. Time Frame

Obligations will be made for this SO over eight years, corresponding to fiscal years 2003 through 2010. The SO Completion Date (the date by which all activities under the SO shall be completed) is September 30, 2011. This time frame is purposefully set fairly far into the future to allow for intensive implementation and the firm establishment of enhanced regional capacity to reduce deforestation and conserve biodiversity. Following the completion of phase II of CARPE in 2010, it is anticipated that the 20 year program will be completed through a final, four year period of “handing over,” when CARPE activities and programs will be turned over to Central African institutions.....

E. Results Framework

A. Goal: Sustainable natural resource management practiced throughout Central Africa in order to promote economic development and alleviate poverty for the benefit of people of the region and the global community

B. Strategic Objective: The Strategic Objective of CARPE is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity

Annex C. List of Individuals Consulted

Name	Institutio	Position
Adjacent, Rene Hillarie	Secrétaire Permanent du Conseil National, République Gabonaise - Présidence de la République Gabón	Secrétaire Général Adjoint de la Présidence de la République
Awash, George	Innovative Resources Management DRC	Community based NRM Supervisor
Allegro, Hewed Dung		Conservator
Alonso, Alfonso	Smithsonian Institution USA	Director for Conservation and Development
Hayward, Kelly Keenan	Wildlife Conservation Society USA	Federal Affairs
Balongelwa, Cosma Wilungula	Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature (ICCN) DRC	Administrateur Délégué Général
Bekker, Robbert	UNOPS Projet ZAI/97/G31 Rehabilitation des Aires Protegees en RDC, Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature DRC	Conseiller Technique Principal
Besacier, Christophe	Ambassade de France Gabon	Conseiller Régional Forêt Environnement Afrique Centrale
Bila-Isaia, Inogwabini	World Wildlife Fund DRC	Program Manager, Lac Toumba LS Segment
Biyogo, A. Paola Mekui		GIS Manager/Minkebe
Blom, Allard	World Wildlife Fund	
Bonilla, Juan Carlos	Conservation International USA	Senior Director, Central Africa
M. Botoliko	Localite Epulu DRC	Chef de localité, Epulu
Carr-Dirick, Brigitte	World Wildlife Fund, Central Africa Programme Office (CARPO), Gabon	Senior Conservation Finance Advisor
Carroll, Richard W.	World Wildlife Fund Endangered Species Program, Africa Ecoregions	Director, Africa Ecoregions Endangered Spaces Program
Cassetta, Matthew V.	Ambassade des Etats-Unis D'Amerique Gabon	Attaché Régional pour l'Environnement

Chambrier, Alexandre Barro	Ministere de L'Economie Forestiere, des Eaux, de la Peche, de l'Environnement, Charge de la Protection de la Nature, Gabon	Ministre Délégué
Chaveas, Mike	USDA Forest Service International Programs USA	Africa Program Specialist
Curran, Bryan	Wildlife Conservation Society Gabon	Directeur des Projets
D'Alessandro, Rudy	National Park Service	International Cooperation Specialist
Davies, Diane	University of Maryland – NASA USA	Co.-Investigator
De Wachter, Pauwel	World Wildlife Fund Gabon	CTP Minkebe
Denelle, Frank R. Gabon	Shell Gabon	Président Directeur Général
Deutsch, James C.	Wildlife Conservation Society, USA	Director, Africa Program
Devers, Didier	University of Maryland Department of Geography DRC	Faculty Research Assistant
Driano, Susan	Department of State USA	AF/EPS
Driscoll, Nicole	Weidemann Associates, Inc. USA	Associate
Dupain, Jef	African Wildlife Foundation DRC	Landscape Coordinator, Maringa-Lapori-Wamba LS
Elkan, Paul	Wildlife Conservation Society ROC	Directeur Général & Représentant
Emmanuel, MVE Mebia		Antropologue
Eyebe, Antoine Justin	WWF/CARPE Cameroon	Focal Point
Fawcett, Katie	Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International Rwanda	Director of Karisoke Research Center
Flynn, John B.	USAID/Kinshasa DRC	CARPE CTO

Foden, Lynn M.	African Wildlife Foundation USA	Program Technical Director
Gambino, Tony	USA	
Garcia, Michael	U.S. Embassy Gabon	Economic Officer
Genge, Cleto Ndikuma	IUCN- CEFDHAC Cameroon	
Grammaticas, Dominic	Governors' Camp Kenya	Financial Controller
Gray, Marke	International Gorilla Conservation Program Rwanda	Regional Monitoring Officer
Gustave, Mabaza		Anthropologue
Hall, Jefferson S.	Wildlife Conservation Society USA	Assistant Director Africa Program
Hart, John	Wildlife Conservation Society DRC	Senior Conservationist Africa/DRC Program
Hellyer, Robert	USAID/DRC	Mission Director
Henson, Adam	African Wildlife Foundation USA	Program Manager
Hujibregts, Bas	World Wildlife Fund Gabon	
Justice, Chris	University of Maryland USA	Professor
Kanene, Moses	African Wildlife Foundation Kenya	Program Manager
Karera, Timothy	USAID/RWANDA Rwanada	Rural Development Specialist
Kisuki Mathe, Benoit K.	Institut Congolaise pour la Conservation de la Nature DRC	Administrateur Directeur Technique
Kiyiapi, James L.	African Wildlife Foundation Kenya	Director
Languy, Marc	World Wildlife Fund Kenya	Albertine Rift Ecoregion Coordinator

Laye, Pierre	Ambassade de France DRC	Attaché de Coopération
Letelier, Veronica	Weidemann Associates, Inc. USA	Managing Associate
Lilly, Alecia A.	Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International Rwanda	Director Conservation Action Program
Lumbuenamo, Raymond	World Wildlife Fund DRC	Directeur National
Makana, Jean Rene	Wildlife Conservation Society	Landscape leader
Dr. Patrick Mehlman	VP of DFGFI	
Methot, Pierre	World Resources Institute USA	Senior Fellow, Global Forest Watch
Minnemeyer, Susan	World Resources Institute USA	GIS Manager, Global Forest Watch
Mwine, Mark David	International Gorilla Conservation Programme Rwanda	Regional Enterprise Officer
Ndoutoume, Omer Ntougou	Conseil National des Parcs Nationaux (CNP) Gabon	Chargé de missions du Président de la République auprès du Secrétaire Permanent du Conseil National des Parcs Nationaux
Ngoga, Telesphore	Office Rwandais du Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux (ORTPN), Rwanda	Chargé de la Conservation à base Communautaire
Niyibizi, Bonaventure	USAID/RWANDA Rwandan	Senior Advisor
Ntoutoume, Jules		Assistant PNMC
Nutter, Felicia B.	Morris Animal Foundation Rwanda	Field Veterinarian
O'Donnell, Karen	USAID AFR/EA USA	Country Development Officer
M. Ohole		Ingénieur
Orbell, Nkel		Directeur Projet Ivindo
Overman, Han		Directeur du Projets PN Mts Cristal-WCS

Plumptre, Andrew	Wildlife Conservation Society Uganda	Director Albertine Rift Programme
M. Ramazani	Localite Epulu DRC	Chef du Centre, Epulu
Ribot, Jesse	World Resources Institute USA	Senior Associate, Institutions and Governance
Robinson, Doreen L.	USAID EGAT/NRM USA	Biodiversity & Natural Resources Specialist
Rousseau, Alain	SNV Netherlands Development Organization DRC	Représentant en RDC/Coordinateur Kinshasa
Ruggiero, Richard	Fish & Wildlife Services USA	
Ruzigandekwe, Fidèle	Office Rwandais du Tourisme et des Parcs Nationaux (ORTPN), Rwanda	RWA/Executive Director
M. Sabiti	Localite Epulu DRC	Chef de localite Epulu
Saracco, Filippo	UNION EUROPEENE DRC	Expert Régional Forêt Environnement Agriculture
Schoorl, Jaap	GTZ (Cooperation Technique Allemande) DRC	Coordonnateur Programme de la Biodiversité et des Forêts
Songolo, Djomo Ngumbi Banuna	Republique Democratique du Congo DRC	Assistant ADG
Sostheme, Ndong Obiang Louis		Conservateur Minkebe Est
Steele, Lisa	World Wildlife Fund DRC	Landscape Leader, Salonga Landscape
Tchamou, Nicodeme	USAID/CARPE DRC	Regional Coordinator
Toham, Andre Kamdem	World Wildlife Fund DRC	Senior Ecoregional Conservation Coordinator & CBFP Technical Manager
Topa, Giuseppe	World Bank USA	
Tshombe, Richard	Wildlife Conservation Society DRC	Country Director
Veit, Peter	World Resources Institute USA	Senior Associate, Regional Director for Africa
Washburn, Ryan	USAID/RWANDA Rwanda	Team Leader, Agriculture and Rural Enterprise Development
Weidemann, Wesley	Weidemann Associates, Inc. USA	President
Yanggen, David	USAID/CARPE DRC	Directeur Adjoint

Annex D. List of Documents Consulted

1. Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment—CARPE—Strategic Plan, FY 2003-2010, December 20, 2002.
2. Environment and Development Group 2002. CARPE Phases 1a and 1b Evaluation—2001: Main Report, February 2002.
3. USAID 2002. Biodiversity Conservation Program Design and Management: A Guide for USAID Staff. Washington, D.C.: USAID Bureau of Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade; Office of Environment and Natural Resources. June 2002.
4. USAID 2005. CARPE II Revised Performance Management Plan, March 16, 2005.
5. USAID/DRC 2005. CARPE Annual Performance Report, FY 2005-2008.
6. USAID/CDIE 1997. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation TIPS, The Role of Evaluation in USAID, No 11.
7. Program Agreements for the following: World Wildlife Fund, Wildlife Conservation Society, African Wildlife Fund, IUCN, Conservation International, World Resources Institute, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NASA, US National Park Service, the Smithsonian, and the US Forest Service.
8. Annual Reports for each agreement—2003, 2004, 2005.
9. Mid-term reports for each agreement—2003, 2004, 2005.
10. USAID review of partners' mid-term and final reports, 2005.
11. CBFP documentation—strategy and any reporting that is done.
12. Other donor programs that are linking with CARPE
13. Congo Basin Forest Partnership 2005. The Forests of the Congo Basin: A Preliminary Assessment, pp. 34.

Annex E. Terms of Reference for the mid-term assessment

STATEMENT OF WORK

Mid-term Review of SO 605: CARPE

I. OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this Statement of Work is to provide for the mid-term assessment of the Central Africa Regional Environment Program (CARPE) SO 605 that will 1) review its progress toward achieving its 2003-2010 strategic objectives and 2) to develop an options framework based on identification of any gaps and opportunities to support changes necessary to ensure successful achievement of those strategic goals.

II. REGIONAL SETTING AND PROGRAM BACKGROUND:

Central Africa contains the second largest contiguous moist tropical forest in the world, representing nearly 20% of the world's remaining biome of this type. More than 60 million people live in the region, and these people depend on their rich forests and other biotic resources for their livelihoods and economic development. The Congo forests form the catchment of the Congo River, a basin of local, regional and global significance. They provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming. The forests also provide food, shelter and livelihoods for many of the regions people and nearly half of the region targeted by CARPE is under forestry concessions, making the forest use central to the region's economy. Deforestation trends and other threats to the forest are increasing in the region that will ultimately negatively impact the development potential of the region.

The countries in the region remain fragile, many having suffered from war with large displacements of their population since the CARPE program began, however the governments of the Congo Basin have recognized the threat and through the signing of the Yaounde Declaration they are indicating a desire to act. Several governments have begun to put appropriate legislative and policy frameworks in place, though implementation is lagging due to inadequately trained personnel and other deficiencies in capacity to implement these commitments. Official recognition of the need for regional cooperation in tackling these challenges is high, and has already led to cooperative work and the formation of channels and structures for collaboration. These need to be greatly enhanced to bring about practical results.

Recognizing the importance and difficulty of conservation in the Congo Basin, USAID began a 20 year program in 1995 aimed at reducing the threats of deforestation and decrease in biodiversity. The current strategic phase of the initiative, CARPE II, began in 2003 and will operate until 2010. CARPE II works in nine countries within the Congo Basin with the strategic objective of reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resource management. CARPE II is using the knowledge and capacity built under CARPE I to implement sustainable natural resource management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the regional and strengthen monitoring capacity.

Although CARPE I was viewed as highly successful, the evaluation of the program revealed several issues that needed to be considered in moving forward CARPE. In its initial phase, CARPE focused on two main issues, building an information base for the region on the resource base and building local capacity through a small grants program and divided effort into themes that included forestry, protected areas, and environmental governance. The program had suffered from a shifting focus which had come from the combination of its broad focus and small budget. In the forestry sector, CARPE I strengthened monitoring and worked on national level policy with some small projects looking at improved forest management regimes—this latter part lacked a systematic approach. The focus on protected areas, although the largest investment, was weak in proportion to the challenge and had not really been designed to be able to systematize the findings, particularly in the area of financing and capacity building. The work on environmental governance was found to be lacking good coordination and integration of local governments and people and was insufficient to truly understand how local resource management affected and could effect change in the forest.

In general, the review of the first phase of CARPE found that it had been successful given the limitations of its budget and the constraint of being managed from Washington. It was recommended that the profile of CARPE in the region would be raised if the program was moved to the field. In general, the reviewers suggested that CARPE Phase II focus more on how land and resource uses can be zoned and regulation to support the conservation needs for forests and biodiversity. The work in monitoring was praised, but it was noted that socio-economic information should be strengthened. There was also praise for the small grants program because of its ability to involve local people and build local capacity and it was recommended that this element be continued. Further, there was a strong recommendation that the program conduct frequent self-examination to ensure better central focus of its efforts. Given the limited budget, it was recommended that the program limit itself to a few landscapes to work on a more integrated approach within those landscapes. The follow-on strategy design considered these suggestions in full.

Unforeseen during the evaluation, the timing of the design and implementation of CARPE II corresponded with the initiation of an international agreement reached at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) where governments, NGOs and the private sector recognized the importance of conserving the Congo, the world's second largest remaining tropical forest, by creating the Congo Basin Forestry Partnership (CBFP). The USG chose to use the CARPE II results framework as an umbrella for many of the activities that the US is undertaking in support of the CBFP.

The USG commitment to CBFP was to provide \$52 million support to the CBFP over the period 2002 to 2005. The majority of that funding is being passed via CARPE. The objectives of CBFP and CARPE overlap significantly and an interagency team provides advice and recommendations related to CBFP activities under CARPE. While CARPE landscapes encompass all of the CFBP areas, CARPE also works in an additional area, the Virunga landscape, thus encompassing nine countries (Burundi, Congo/Brazzaville, Central Africa Republic, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo Gabon, Rwanda, and Sao Tome-Principe). Additionally, CBFP includes partners other than CARPE partners. Given its strategic focus, CARPE must implement its part of the CFBP US commitment through activities that are consistent with its SO and IRs but that support the conservation of the 11 CBFP landscapes under CFBP. The implementation of the CFBP related activities within CARPE are overseen by an Interagency Committee that meets regularly in Washington.

III. NEEDS STATEMENT:

CARPE Phase II will be in its third year of implementation at the time of this assessment. Given the 7-year period for this phase of CARPE, it is necessary to check the validity of the strategic approach based on expected and actual results at the mid-term point. This assessment will look at three levels: **performance of the program** elements toward achieving their results; **the management structure** and how this is affecting the program performance; and the **overall strategic design** and how well it is moving the program to results that will ensure the long-term conservation in the Congo. These areas need to be analyzed for the following questions to determine if specific changes are needed in the program that will improve its effectiveness and help ensure that strategic objectives of CARPE are achieved.

- Is the program advancing on track so that CARPE will reach its goals for Phase I by 2010 and for the overall program by 2015?
- Is CARPE design sufficient to ensure that the results and impacts achieved will be maintained beyond the LOP of CARPE?
- What are the priorities for maintaining and changing approaches of management and/or programming to ensure that CARPE is on and stays on track?

The answers to these questions will be used to guide the mid-term decisions concerning program content, funding and management with the obligation of FY 2006 funds and beyond. The timing of this assessment is made more salient because 2005 marks the end of the USG's commitment to CBFP. An evaluation at this time is necessary to determine the results of the US effort in its participation in CFBP via CARPE and to help CARPE strategize for the post-commitment era. How CARPE and the CBFP integration should precede beyond the FY 2005 obligations so as to most effectively achieve their two similar goals is one of the central questions for USAID and other participants that will be assisted by the outcomes of this assessment.

IV. STATEMENT OF WORK:

To address the needs for this review, a three-stage work process is envisioned, with three corresponding products: a detailed work plan that includes preliminary outlines for the second and third deliverable, an assessment of current program performance, management structure and strategic review, and an options framework for the second half of CARPE II that lays out options for maintaining and changing programs, management and strategic design that will support CARPE II reach its goals for this phase and help ensure that the program is positioned to reach the overall program goals by 2015. The contractor is however invited to use his/her creativity to propose alternatives to the vision of process and products given here. In that sense the provisions below are illustrative.

The evaluation will be carried out in close coordination with the CARPE Team and should be designed for transparency and participation by CARPE's main partners and counterparts, including other participating USG agencies, in-region and DC based offices of principle implementing NGOs, USAID and State Department offices, other donors in the region and host country governments and institutions. The CTO must provide prior approval of all documents produced by the contractor before they can be distributed beyond the CARPE Team.

This process should result in three final documents: 1) a detailed work plan that includes a preliminary outline for the evaluation, which shall be submitted as a draft to USAID CARPE Director within two weeks signature of the Task Order; 2) an assessment/evaluation of CARPE's program performance, its management structure and of the overall strategic design of the program with recommendations that will guide the decisions made to optimize activities for the successful completion of CARPE II, to be submitted within two months of approval of the work plan; and 3) summary presentation materials, one PowerPoint and one-page summary hand-outs, that will be used to disseminate the findings of the evaluation to partners and other actors, to be submitted within three months of signature of the Task Order.

- 1) The work plan: The detailed work plan should be developed in collaboration with the CARPE team and should lay out the overall approach, specific activities to be completed and a schedule for the completion of the tasks. The approach proposed should be as participatory as practical given the scope of the program, its political profile, its physical locations, and time and budgetary considerations. The CTO will approve the work plan. The plan will be subject to modification during implementation by mutual consent. The work plan shall be submitted to CARPE Director within two weeks of signature of the Task Order.
- 2) The Evaluation: The overall evaluation will consider three CARPE aspects or areas: **program performance; program management; and the strategic design.** The evaluation shall examine the strengths and weakness of the program elements, how the program management is advancing CARPE toward reaching its objectives and will review the underlying assumptions and hypothesis of the strategy to determine how robust the program is in light of the outcomes to date. In general, the document will identify where and why CARPE is succeeding or not succeeding, analyze the "sustainability" of its impacts, and specifically recommend how to improve, enhance or extend achievement of the intended results through changes in program, management or overall strategic design. The report will be divided into four sections that address the following topics:

a. Program performance:

The Contractor will gather information and prepare an assessment of the performance of current programs under CARPE, which includes the 12 landscape sites and the supporting work being done by federal agencies in terms of monitoring, policy, and capacity building. (a list of the sites, the partners on each and CARPE's other partners can be found in Annex III), and the work of "cross-cutting" implementing organizations on environmental governance and natural resources monitoring.

The initial step in this process will be based on analysis of the documentation from these different activities. As a performance based program, CARPE has an annual cycle of work planning, reporting and evaluation that will provide data and information for performance analysis. The document analysis will guide interviews with partners, particularly in Kinshasa and Washington and help identify no more than two site visits that will be used to ground-truth the reported information.

The following should help guide this part of the analysis:

- i. CARPE works in 12 landscapes. Which sites are achieving or exceeding their goals? What factors seem to have the greatest influence in whether or not a site is achieving its goals? Are the overall goals realistic for the different landscapes or do they need to be adjusted? Are the measures of accomplishment fair and sufficient to actually capture the progress and impacts being made in these landscapes?
- ii. CARPE has a large set of implementing partners with several partners combining skills to implement a landscape land use planning and implementation process. In which sites or in addressing which issues has this integration proved the most effective? What factors seem to contribute to that effective collaboration?
- iii. CARPE has a set of activities that are not directly working in landscapes, but are designed to achieve results that are related to policy, NRM monitoring or capacity-building. Which of these projects are the most effective in contributing to the strategic objective? Which of these approaches has proven most effective in supporting the enabling environment for progress on the landscapes?
- iv. There are three Intermediate Results (IRs) in CARPE's strategic framework. Is sufficient progress being made under each of these IRs to achieve the planned result of reducing the degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional resource management? What changes in priorities and/or allocation of resources need to be considered to ensure sufficient progress across the IRs?
- v. The Phase I evaluation strongly supported maintaining the small grants program as an effective capacity building tool. Is the small grants program still an effective capacity building tool within the new landscape approach? Does this program provide sufficient support to capacity building for overall accomplishment of the program goals? Is the effectiveness of this program being captured by the PMP?
- vi. The CARPE Focal Point positions were carried over from Phase I and are administratively managed by WWF in Gabon, DRC and Cameroon. Is the role and Terms of Reference of the Focal Points consistent with the stated results of Phase II? Are the Focal Points effectively carrying out their new TORs? Are CARPE partners and stakeholders aware of the role of the Focal Points? Should there be changes in the Focal Points TORs or management?
- vii. CARPE is the USG's vehicle for contributing to the Congo Basin Forest Partnership. How is the linkage with and focus on CBFP affecting CARPE's achievement its overall goal of reducing deforestation and conserving biodiversity? How should this linkage be changed to better support sustainability in light of current and future commitments to CBFP?

b. Management structure assessment

The contractor will gather information and prepare an assessment of the management structure of CARPE. CARPE is managed as multi-directional collaborations across the region and functions in the context of a US international commitment to cooperation with multiple levels of oversight. The 12 CARPE landscapes, which are the basic framework for management decisions, currently span seven countries of which only two have USAID missions. The CARPE program staff is in Kinshasa and the agreement officials are in Nairobi. The mechanisms used for obligating money involve collaboration with the EGAT and Africa bureaus in Washington. And, CARPE's activities as linked with the CBFP are overseen by an inter-institutional body in Washington that has USG agency representatives and representatives from the CARPE federal agency implementing partners. Additionally, the CARPE Focal Points are working at country level as stated in a.vi above.

The contractor will examine the multiple layers of management involved in CARPE from the perspectives of the USAID, the CARPE implementing partners, the interagency committee, other donors and the host countries. Interviews with a selected group of those involved in USAID, the Department of State, other USG and the international NGOs and donors in both Africa and Washington DC should center on the degree to which the management structure as it exists is helping and/or slowing the progress of this program and be guided by the following :

- i. CARPE was transferred from Washington to Kinshasa in 2002 to increase the visibility of CARPE in the region and improve coordination with different CARPE actors. Has this change been effective?
- ii. CARPE has multiple layers of coordination and must answer to diverse interests. How clearly are the roles and responsibilities of USAID, its partners and other actors defined in the implementation of programs? Are these responsibilities sufficiently coordinated? Is staffing at the various management levels sufficient to ensure good implementation as well as good coordination of the program?
- iii. CARPE's principle landscape agreements are funded via Washington based Leader with Associate mechanisms. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the current agreement arrangements? How do the terms of the agreements influence the management of the program both in technical and financial terms? What changes should be considered?
- iv. Each landscape or landscape has an assigned NGO segment leader that is responsible to USAID for managing and coordinating the work plans and budgets for all the implementing partners for that landscape/segment. Has the landscape leader approach been effective for USAID and for the partners on consolidating the efforts within these sites? How does this structure impact prioritization of the program given indicators and outcomes? Has this structure increased coordination within and between sites?

c. Assessment of the strategic design

The contractor will gather information and prepare an assessment of the strengths, weaknesses and overall continued validity of the strategic design of CARPE II. This assessment should take into consideration the recommendations of the evaluation of CARPE I, how were these recommendations have been addressed and integrated into the design of the Phase II, and whether those efforts have increased the program's effectiveness. The contractor should examine these issues against the changes in context that have occurred. The assessment should discuss the continued validity of the key factors and critical assumptions made in the development of this strategy and if these need to be redrawn. The assessment should build from the outcomes of the performance and management review chapters, address the central questions of whether the program is on track and, if not, how program design, management structure and/or the planned goals and objectives are limiting the progress of the program.

- i. The overall goal of CARPE is to reduce deforestation and loss of biodiversity in the Congo Basin. Is CARPE II on track to achieve its goal by its end in 2011 and 2015? What are the strengths and weakness of the current program design elements of CARPE's current structure and design that will affect the achievement of its goal? Moving to the second half of this strategy, are there adjustments in the performance, management or overall strategic design that need to be made and what adjustments would be advised?
- ii. CARPE is a regional program in an area that has been highly conflicted and where the USG has a weak presence. How does the context of this program affect its implementation and impact—consider the stability of the countries, the lack of bilateral missions and the level of corruption? Has the context changed and, if so, how? Are the critical assumptions still valid or, if not, how do they need to be changed?
- iii. CARPE II is authorized until 2011 and a follow-on Phase II is envisaged to continue until 2015. Will there be sufficient capacity and viable models in the Congo Basin at the end of CARPE to maintain the progress it has supported toward sustainable natural resource management in the region? What key factors need to be in place by the end of Phase II that will ensure the sustainability of CARPE's impacts once USAID investment ends?

- iv. CARPE is designed around 12 landscapes. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this landscape focus? Should CARPE consider a more active role in identifying and addressing cross-cutting issues between landscapes that impact the enabling environment for conservation of those landscapes?
- v. Building local conservation capacity is a major goal of CARPE. Is the current approach of the NGO implementing partners and cross-cutting federal agency service providers adequately addressing the capacity building objective? Is the small grants program sufficient to satisfy the capacity building needs of the local NGO aspect of this program? If not, what changes are needed to improve impact in this area, or what other programs need to be considered to fulfill the capacity building needs of the region?

d. Recommendations for optimization of CARPE

In the final chapter of the evaluation the contractor should provide a framework of recommendations on options for maintaining and changing program elements, management structure and/or the overall strategic design of CARPE to most efficiently use resources to ensure successful completion of the program objectives as set forth in the program strategy, project agreements and work plans. This chapter could contain the following:

- i. Dispassionate overview of the weaknesses, gaps, strengths, constraints, opportunities, and challenges as indicated by the review of the performance, management and with consideration of the stated objectives and purpose of CARPE II and CARPE overall.
- ii. Discussion of whether and how to incorporate a more development based approach as part of the programs strategic goals and implementation constraints.
- iii. Analyze alternatives for improving the regionalization of the program through linkages across the landscapes. How could these assist in the more effective consolidation of the management within the landscapes? Potential links could be topical, geographic, political, sectoral, or identification of common capacity needs.
- iv. Review the roles, responsibilities and performance to date of USAID, government agencies, NGOs, and private sector partner organizations and how to optimize these.
- v. Discussion of what level of funding is necessary to achieve the targets and results as described in the PMP and strategic framework. Is the progress of this program toward its overall goals on a trajectory to achieve these stated results? If funding declines, what are the critical elements to maintain and what will be the impact of discontinuing lower priority elements of the program in terms of the reduction in results and impacts of this program?

V. TASKS, DELIVERABLES AND SCHEDULES:

This project will consist of five main tasks with three with final deliverables. All of these tasks should be carried out as a team. Work on each task will overlap with that on previous and subsequent tasks and the consultant team is expected to have regular consultation the CARPE program team. Any draft material must be cleared by the CTO on this contract before it can be shared outside of AID. Deliverables are as indicated. The schedule outlined reflects limits imposed by outside constraints and is subject to modification in the final work plan, preferably to shorten it by condensing the process.

Task 1: Prepare Detailed Work Plan

Under this task the consultant team will be provided a packet of basic material on CARPE to review (current strategy, last evaluation, annual report and final annual report for all programs) and will submit for approval a work plan outlining overall approach, specific activities to be completed, and schedules for each of the following tasks. This plan

should be prepared in consultation with the CARPE team and will be subject to modification during implementation by mutual consent. The deliverable will be the final written plan. This initial work plan proposal should be submitted for approval within three weeks of signing of the Task Order.

Task 2: Analysis of performance, management and strategic design

The contractor will gather information and prepare an assessment of the performance of the current programs and partners, the management structure and the overall strategic design. This process should be participatory and include as many of the major actors influencing CARPE as is practical given time constraints.

Review of appropriate documents: The contractor will review a broad set of CARPE, CBFP and other pertinent documentation as provided by USAID and the CARPE team. The contractor will identify and create additional documentation to assist in the development of their review questions and key contacts for participation in the evaluation. CARPE has now an annual program documentation process that allows for the management to receive consistent data from its 12 landscapes and other partnerships semi-annually. In addition most work plan and results documents are posted on the CARPE web-site and there is a rich literature from CARPE I. The contractor is urged to identify and record further documentation discovered valuable during this review. After the documentation review, the contractor should present to the CARPE team a plan of who will be contacted and how they will seek consistent input from the key actors. The contractor will also identify not more than two field sites for visits that will provide them with an opportunity to confirm the information on performance, management and coordination.

Interview of a sample of key actors: Contractors should plan to contact/interview partners in Kinshasa as well as their home institutions in DC, key actors from the interagency process (performance, management and strategy), key USG contacts in the countries where CARPE operates (program strategy and management) and the administrative backstops in Nairobi concerning CARPE (management). Although different actors have specialized views, the contractor should be seeking from each their view of CARPE's effectiveness, strengths and weaknesses in terms of their own institutions, relative to the CARPE program framework and relative to the needs and opportunities in the region.

Site visits: The team will travel to no more than two field sites. The visits will be designed to help the consultant team verify the results that are being reported in the CARPE reporting documents as well as to provide context and local input to the evaluation. The sites will be decided upon by CARPE staff after consultations with the contractor. The visits will be conducted from Kinshasa to representative landscape sites in Central Africa. USAID will arrange for and pay for air charter services to these two sites.

Task 3: Draft report of the performance, management and strategic design assessment and options for optimization

The draft assessment will be prepared and submitted to CARPE for review and comment. After taking CARPE comments into account and with CTO clearance, this report will be subjected to a participatory commentary process to be proposed by the contractor. Comments will be reviewed and considered in the redrafting of the final document. A summary of the comments will be included as an annex.

Task 4: Final report

After incorporating the comments, the draft report will be resubmitted to CARPE for final review. Comments and corrections will be incorporated in preparing the final document and the Executive Summary will be translated to French. This final version should be received within 30 days of the CTO acceptance of the final draft version. The final document should be delivered to CARPE in electronic and hard copy. Distribution of the document will be by the CARPE team.

Task 5: Presentation of the conclusions

The team leader of the project will develop a public presentation of the conclusions of this evaluation, including PowerPoint presentation and a one-page summary hand-out in both English and French language. The materials shall be developed with the target audience of USAID/Washington officials, the interagency committee and furthermore for regional use by US Embassy Public Diplomacy programs, host country actors and other donors. The materials will be approved by USAID before production.

Annex F. Suggestions for Improvements in the Results Framework and Indicators

Committees have been formed to decide on standardization of indicators for natural resource monitoring for the State of the Forest Report. The standardized indicators and monitoring methods should be adopted in CARPE landscapes.

The following are specific recommendations for each IR and indicator:

IR 1: Natural resources managed sustainably

IR Indicator 1.1 Number of landscapes and other focal areas covered by integrated land use plans; Indicator and workplan targets should be calibrated to take into account the different context, threats, and challenges in each landscape.

IR Indicator 1.2 Number of different use zones (e.g., parks & PAs; CBNRM areas; forestry concessions; plantations) within landscapes with sustainable management plans

Targets for landscape level indicators in the next phase need to be defined in a way that leads to more objective and quantitative measurements. This could be number of organizations actively involved in land use planning; percentage of LS area for which zones have been delineated; percentage of LS area for which there is a management plan; number of agreements signed between local LS partners such as government conservation agencies, forest management agencies, concessions, and CBOs to implement management plans; number of associations formed to create jobs and improve local livelihoods, such as farmer marketing groups, community forestry enterprises, ecotourism, etc.

IR Indicator 1.3 Number of landscapes or other focal areas implementing surveillance system for illegal logging

According to the Illegal Logging Task Force Report, “it is believed that in general the forestry legislation of Central Africa is sufficiently detailed and precise to allow proper determination of what is legal or not. However, many of the application texts supporting the enforcement of these forest laws have yet to be passed or applied, thus effectively rendering full compliance with the law difficult at best.”

LS partners that were interviewed were not able to provide much information about the extent of illegal logging within the landscape. The recommendations of the Illegal Logging Task Force¹ on monitoring at the LS level should be adopted, as well as the recommendation to revise the indicator parameter to “violations brought to the attention of the public, of international markets, and of the Government authorities.”

IR Indicator 1.4 Number of landscapes implementing Bushmeat surveillance system

CARPE partners have initiated data collection and other interventions related to Bushmeat in almost all landscapes, although there is no standard approach.

Strategies to address the Bushmeat threat need to move beyond monitoring. Instead of measuring number of landscapes implementing a Bushmeat surveillance system, develop methods to measure how landscape and country level interventions are having an impact on reducing illegal Bushmeat harvesting and trade. This indicator could measure the impact of a wide range of livelihoods, policy, or enforcement interventions, depending on local Bushmeat issues and the threat posed.

¹ Beck, Jim; Blom, Allard; Devers, Didier; Makana, Jean-Remy; Methot, Pierre; Veit, Peter, 1005. *Illegal Logging Task Force Report*, CARPE, 12 pp.

IR 2: Natural resource governance (institutions, policies, laws) strengthened

IR Indicator 2.1 Number of key new laws or policies for PAs, logging concessions, and CBNRM passed or old laws and policies reformed compared with a list of recommended or promoted reforms
CARPE partners have not developed a consensus regarding a policy agenda for CARPE involvement and their suggestions for such a *future* agenda mostly relate to landscape-specific issues and policy execution and enforcement.

IR Indicator 2.2 Number of NGO (and other civil society organizations) advocacy initiatives & activities (e.g., media articles about environmental governance issues e.g. illegal logging, Bushmeat poaching; NR court cases brought or complaints filed with appropriate government agencies) recommended or promoted reforms.

These initiatives are reported by implementing partners in the Country level reports, nevertheless, with the exception of Cameroon, NGO policy initiatives have mostly focused on issues at the landscape level rather than at the national level.

Some of these activities relate to new policies but most relate to implementation and/or clarification of existing policies: (Virunga park boundary demarcation/tri-national acceptance; establishing community hunting/fishing zones within forest concessions in ROC; tourism planning for conservation areas (AWF in Virunga; WCS in Gabon).

IR 3: Natural resources monitoring institutionalized

IR Indicator 3.1 Number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments

- UMD and NASA are providing remotely sensed data, which is to be verified on the ground by landscape implementing partners. Landscape implementers have not yet begun to report on this indicator. The next step should be to use the GIS modeling tools to classify forest types, and then develop ground-truthing inventory designs that can be realistically carried out in the landscapes.
- WRI's Global Forest Watch produced the Interactive Forestry Atlas for Cameroon. WRI/GFW has widely disseminated the atlas and provided training on how to use the data and tools. The atlas is intended for use in policy advocacy and increasing transparency by making objectively compiled data on forest resources available to all. Nevertheless WRI/GFW's stance on its application is politically neutral – they do not advise partners on how the data should be used to improve natural resource governance.

IR Indicator 3.2 Assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions (e.g. government agencies, universities and research institutions, NGOs, regional institutions) to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision making

WRI has compiled a report on “Preliminary assessment of capacity of Congo Basin (African) institutions to collect and analyze information of adequate quality for decision-making. For the most part other CARPE partners have not carried out assessments of national level agencies, universities, forestry schools, research centers or NGOs. World Bank and EU programs planned for several countries in the region will address some of these issues. CARPE could contribute to institutional assessments carried out by other donor programs by adapting existing institutional assessment indices to standardize measurement of increased institutional capacity.

Assumptions: USAID should alter the critical assumptions to reflect an ability to continue limited implementation in most conflict and fragile situations

USAID/Central Africa Regional Annual Report FY 2005

January 31, 2005

Central Africa Regional

Cover Memo

MEMORANDUM

TO: AA/AFR - Lloyd Pierson

FROM: USAID/DRC Mission Director - Robert Hellyer

DATE: December 17, 2004

SUBJECT: Cover Memorandum for the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) FY 2005 Annual Report Submission

USAID/DRC hereby submits the Annual Report for the Central African Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) Strategic Objective (SO) number 605-001. An Annual Report document for CARPE separate from that submitted for the bilateral program managed by USAID/DRC is required per Annual Report Africa Bureau Supplemental Guidance. CARPE is notified as one single SO in FY 2005 as Central Africa Regional 605-001. It is a separate SO in the USAID/DRC program: Reduced rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national and regional natural resources management capacity.

CARPE is the principal vehicle for United States participation in the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP), a U.S. Presidential Initiative and international partnership. Results are reported semi-annually via the On-Line Presidential Initiative Network (OPIN) system. In addition to the CBFP, CARPE supports a broad range of US interests and Congressional earmarks, including biodiversity and tropical forestry conservation, global climate change, micro-enterprise, and the Presidential Initiative Against Illegal Logging (PIAIL.)

Because CARPE operates in mainly non-presence countries, the USAID Operating Unit based in Kinshasa has the unusual responsibility for coordinating CBFP implementation and policy with U.S. Embassies throughout Central Africa, several U.S. federal agencies, other donors, and private sector partners. The SO Team Leader and Mission Director travel extensively throughout the region to ensure that all Ambassadors and country teams in CARPE countries are fully briefed on CARPE and CBFP actions and plans. This coordination is costly and time consuming, but it has greatly facilitated interagency and international coordination.

USAID/DRC proposes no changes in the strategic plan at this time. A Performance Management Plan, developed through an extensive participatory process with CARPE partners, was approved in January 2004. Cooperative Agreements under the program are performance-based. The FY 2004 obligation, the second under the Strategic Plan, was concluded after a thorough performance review of the first six months of field implementation. Sufficient flexibility is built into the program to allow USAID/DRC to allocate SO financial resources according to those activities and geographic areas where conditions are most conducive to achieving results. This flexibility will allow USAID/DRC to make the most effective use of program resources. A major program evaluation is planned for early FY 2006.

Implementing partners include a broad selection of international conservation non-governmental organizations (NGOs), U.S. federal agencies, local NGOs, and regional governments and their agencies. Increasing participation of the private sector was achieved during FY 04, particularly with private logging concessions.

There are no major resource issues expected for 2005. All staff positions are program-funded, nevertheless, attracting and retaining qualified management staff will be a chronic problem. If additional biodiversity funds should be available in FY 2005, CARPE can readily and effectively make good use of additional resources.

A. Program Performance Summary

Program Narrative (FY 2004): The Congo Basin contains the second largest area of contiguous moist tropical forest in the world. Central Africa's tropical forests (of all types) cover approximately 2 million square kilometers; the Congo Basin's moist deciduous forests cover approximately 1.14 million square kilometers, nearly 20% of the world's remaining area of this biome. Tropical rainforest covers parts of Cameroon, the Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo (ROC), Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. These forests form the catchment basin of the Congo River, a watershed of local, regional and global significance. The forests provide valuable ecological services by controlling and buffering climate at a regional scale, and by absorbing and storing excess carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuels, thereby helping to slow the rate of global climate warming.

Of the more than 60 million people that live in the region, about 22 million are located in urban areas. At present rates of population growth, the region is expected to contain 150 million people by the year 2025. Population density is on the whole quite low, with a regional average of 14 persons per square kilometer. There is considerable variation within the region, however, ranging from 4.5 persons/km² in Gabon, to 25.4 persons/km² in Cameroon. While much of the landscape remains sparsely populated, rapid urbanization has created severe localized pressures on forests and other natural resources. Recent deforestation trends have been troubling, and population and economic pressures are building which could further accelerate forest loss in the region.

Oil and mineral revenues for some countries have been declining (Gabon, DRC and Cameroon, for example), while for others they have started to increase (Equatorial Guinea, most notably). Governments and private commercial interests have meanwhile been turning more energetically to the forest as a revenue source, in some cases to compensate for lower oil and mineral revenues, and in others as a response to global demand for tropical timber products.

Conflict has affected many of the Congo Basin countries over the past several years. The sources of the conflict are complex and historic, but are often fueled by rivalry over natural resources including minerals and forest products. This conflict has had a devastating effect on both human and wildlife populations over large areas. Despite these extraordinarily difficult circumstances, national conservation staff supported in most cases by international Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) have managed to protect many key parks and protected areas. In the past few years, several Congo Basin countries have enacted and published new and modern forestry codes as well. These laws provide a framework for conservation and management of the vast tropical forests of the region.

After seven years of operation, the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) shifted its strategic focus and changed the location of its management functions from Washington, DC to Kinshasa, DRC in January 2003. In its first phase, CARPE partners focused on increasing the knowledge of Central African forests and biodiversity, and building institutional and human resources capacity. In the next thirteen years, however, CARPE partners will apply and implement sustainable natural resources management practices in the field, improve environmental governance in the region, and strengthen natural resources monitoring capacity.

It is in the self-interest of the United States Government to support the rational and sustainable development of this region, and at the same time address global environmental concerns. The complex political and economic situation in the region limits USAID's ability to address these important development and environmental challenges on a bilateral basis, because USAID has a physical presence in only two countries in the region. For this reason, a regional approach was taken in implementing CARPE beginning in 1995. This program was designed to provide: (1) a mechanism to support conservation and sustainable management of natural resources in the tropical forests of Central Africa; and (2) a flexible instrument to carry out an analytical agenda and foster regional coordination in dealing with environmental issues. During this initial phase, African capacity has been enhanced; African institutions supported and African civil society strengthened. This groundwork has created the conditions for more intensive USAID support.

CARPE Phase II has completed the first operational year since the management was shifted to Kinshasa in 2003. The Strategic Objective of CARPE II is to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity. In the past, conservation strategies were typically developed to fit within protected areas, community lands, or private sector holdings within political boundaries. Over time there has been increasing recognition that wildlife movements, ecological processes, and human influences move across such borders. As a result, conservation efforts that focus solely within the boundaries of national parks, private concessions, and even single countries may not succeed. Addressing natural resources management at a larger scale allows for broader examination of conflicting policies and practices across jurisdictions and land-use regimes. To accommodate a more integrated perspective the CARPE program is taking a landscape level approach to reduce

threats to and conserve the biodiversity of the Congo Basin.

Approximately 90% of the CARPE landscapes lie outside of parks and reserves, and are under the de facto or de jure administration of private sector companies. To minimize the adverse environmental impacts of land uses within these areas, CARPE partners collaborate with the private sector, particularly logging and oil companies. Already these partnerships have proven to provide significant payoffs for conservation within the overall landscapes. NGO-private sector partnerships with logging companies in the Basin have worked to eliminate hunting of protected animal species, designate no-cut zones for sensitive wildlife areas, establish local hunting regulations for non-endangered game, minimize the extent of road development, and close down roads following logging. Overall CARPE anticipates that taking this approach will help ensure the effective conservation of protected areas and biodiversity and in turn retain the intrinsic and commodity values of the forest and moist savanna ecosystems of Central Africa so that they can continue to contribute to the livelihoods of local people and the sustainable economic development of these nations.

Challenges: The challenge facing decision makers, the global community and Basin citizens alike is to strike a balance in the conservation of these natural resources to satisfy current needs while protecting the resource base for future generations. This challenge is particularly acute in the face of prolonged political instability and conflict in many of the Basin countries, weak governance institutions, seriously depleted human and institutional capacity and a rapidly growing international demand for both tropical timber products and non-timber forest resources.

The “landscape approach” taken by CARPE focuses on managing large, multiple-use forest zones with high priority for biodiversity conservation. Many of these landscapes overlap two and even three country borders. Coordination among multiple governments, other donors, implementing partners and multiple stakeholders is a substantial management challenge for CARPE and its implementing partners. Several mechanisms are being developed to cope with these management challenges including the concept of “landscape leaders”, steering committees and other structures, but the transaction costs of coordinating multiple actors are significant, while implementation capacity is only now reaching a desirable level.

Because USAID does not have direct agreements with regional host governments and is physically present only in the DRC and Rwanda, an important CARPE challenge is to facilitate positive interaction amongst the U.S. Embassies, the implementing NGO partners, host governments, and regional African institutions. Given the Program’s staffing constraints and the management needs spanning several countries, it is a challenge to evenly address the political, management, administrative, and technical demands of the program.

Key Achievements: The launching of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) has raised the profile and worldwide interest in the overall conservation of the Congo Basin. The United States facilitation of the CBFP over the past year has greatly solidified the collaborative spirit of the program and has catalysed the dialogue between the international partners. On the ground the CBFP has proved to be a significant collaborative forum to mobilize and engage the political will of the Congo Basin country governments to collaborate on the management and conservation of the Basin resources. USAID’s contribution to this partnership is implemented through the CARPE II program’s direct support to 11 implementing partners.

FY 2004 marked the first year of CARPE II; program implementation and substantial progress was made towards achieving the annual performance benchmarks. In all CARPE countries, partners have developed relationships with local communities, private and public sectors and other stakeholders towards the creation of land use plans within the target landscapes. CARPE partner collaboration with the private sector has raised the standards for forest management throughout the Congo Basin. Several major logging companies are moving toward forestry certification and in the process have committed to improving management practices through activities such as halting the bush meat trade associated with their concessions.

CARPE is working to improve conservation and sustainable resource management across the Basin in over 65 million hectares. In the Sangha Trinational Landscape, which straddles the borders of Cameroon, ROC, and the CAR, capacity building efforts have led to the creation of a business development plan for the landscape. This plan will form the foundation for the soon to be established Sangha Trinational Trust Fund, the first of its kind in the region. In Gabon, a newly strengthened Gamba Conservation Center was launched as an information hub providing technical support, data and coordination services for all current and potential collaborators in the region.

Generating significant financial resources to support the long-term management of protected areas in the region is a notable challenge that CARPE partners have taken on. Over the past fiscal year, partners have made inroads. In Gabon, business plans for 13 new National parks have been developed, with significant resources already attracted. The national governments of Cameroon, Gabon and the ROC have endorsed landscape management plans for a tri-

national landscape, with Global Environment Fund resources over \$10 million already secured.

The CARPE program is reporting on two indicators from the performance monitoring plan to the USAID annual report this year: the number of different use zones (e.g., protected areas, community areas, forestry concessions) within landscapes with sustainable management plans; and, the number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments. Eight sustainable management plans are being reported in year one. Seven of the eight sustainable management plans are in Gabon. Shell Gabon manages four separate areas with certified environmental management plans in their oil concession lands located in the protected areas of the Gamba Complex. An additional three logging concessions in northern Gabon are operating under sustainable management plans. The management plans guide the utilization of resources and guarantee that resources are used or harvested at sustainable rates. Although CARPE is reporting zero forest cover assessments for Fiscal Year 2004, by the end of the 2004 calendar year, there will be a very high resolution change map available for the Maringa Lopori Wamba landscape in the DRC. Creating a baseline for deforestation will allow partners to analyze the forest cover change at the landscape level and also allow for the development of immediate responses to areas experiencing higher levels of deforestation. It is expected that over the life of the program, high resolution change maps will be available for most, if not all of the landscapes.

Environmental Compliance: The initial environmental examination (IEE) was completed in 2003 and approved by the Bureau Environmental Officer (BEO). During FY 04, as more detailed work plans were developed by partners and approved by USAID an amended IEE that reflects actual field activities was prepared by the CARPE SO Team and submitted in July 2004 for approval by the BEO.

B. SO Level Performance Narrative:

605-001: Reduce the Rate of Forest Degradation and Loss of Biodiversity through Increased Local, National, and Regional Natural Resource Management Capacity

Performance Goal: Partnerships, initiatives, and implemented international treaties and agreements that protect the environment and promote efficient energy use and resource management

SO 04 Performance Overview: FY 2004 was the first year of implementation under the CARPE II Strategic Objective. Activities commenced in 12 CARPE focal areas covering seven countries in the Congo Basin to reduce the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity. The CARPE II Performance Management Plan was approved in FY 04 following a participatory workshop held in Washington which contributed to the finalization of the results framework. Progress towards the intermediate results varies widely among the CARPE landscapes; however, across all of the focal landscapes partners have established appropriate management structures to effect positive conservation impacts on the ground. The program has completed one cycle of reporting, (semi-annual report, annual report, work plan), USAID/DRC has determined that, with some fine tuning, the reporting structures will be an effective way for USAID and partners to track progress and monitor performance comprehensively and consistently across all the landscapes and partner organizations ensuring accountability for results.

The CARPE program is reporting on two indicators from the performance monitoring plan this year; number of different use zones (e.g., protected areas, community areas, forestry concessions) within landscapes with sustainable management plans, and; number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments. Eight sustainable management plans are being reported in year one. Seven of the eight sustainable management plans are in Gabon. Shell Gabon manages four separate areas with certified environmental management plans in their oil concession lands located in the protected areas of the Gamba Complex. An additional three logging concessions in northern Gabon are operating under sustainable management plans. The management plans guide the utilization of resources and guarantee that resources are used or harvested at sustainable rates. Although CARPE is reporting zero forest cover assessments for fiscal year 2004, by the end of the 2004 calendar year there will be a very high resolution change map available for the Maringa Lopori Wamba landscape in DRC. Creating a baseline for deforestation will allow partners to analyze the forest cover change at the landscape level and among other things allow for the development of immediate responses to areas experiencing higher levels of deforestation. It is expected that over the life of the program high resolution change maps will be available for most, if not all of the landscapes.

04 SO Performance:

Improve Sustainable Management Of Natural Resources And Biodiversity Conservation

CARPE partners made considerable progress towards achieving performance benchmarks set out in the year one work plans. In the policy arena, several CARPE country governments demonstrated their support for conservation through public commitments to establishing and strengthening national institutions responsible for natural resource conservation. With technical support and assistance from CARPE partners, the Gabonese government has taken

steps towards developing a framework for its network of National Parks which includes the recent addition of 13 new protected areas. Next door, in the Republic of Congo, the government announced at a major international conservation forum its commitment to create a new national institutional structure, the Congo Wildlife Service, to manage the country's network of protected areas. On the ground, partners have initiated zoning processes in most of the focal landscapes. One of the most important activities at the landscape level, this process will among other things, create methods to secure lands for livelihoods, ensure that forest peoples maintain traditional access rights by identifying areas for multiple-use, demarcate areas for industrial extraction and facilitate dialogue with private sector corporations and conserve globally important natural resources.

The CARPE program is a prime example of public-private alliances. Implementing partners have contributed over \$10 million to the CARPE program alliance in 2004 and an additional \$10 million will be contributed in 2005. In the context of the CBFP, a range of international organizations and private companies have already committed or are in the advance stages of committing an additional \$50 million to support the CBFP objectives. The public-private alliances have complemented and leveraged U.S funding adding value to the policy and on-the-ground implementation of the CARPE program.

The governments of all six of the CBFP countries have signed on to the Partnership and support the CBFP objectives. The host country governments either have in place or are developing legislation and regulatory frameworks that support forestry codes. A large component of CARPE focuses on the implementation of programs that inspect logging concession titles and conduct field visits for validation that logging is being carried out only where proper titles have been issued. Where violations are detected, enforcement actions are initiated by forestry authorities. Partners track the presence of illegal logging and provide an independent check on the integrity of timber harvesting.

Appropriate staffing for the CARPE SO Team and coordination of CARPE with the Congo Basin Forest Partnership Presidential Initiative pose program management challenges. At present, the CARPE SO Team consists of a SO Team leader, A Third Country National professional staffer, and an administrative assistant. Though advertising for a deputy SO Team leader was completed and a contract signed in August 2003, the individual was evacuated from post for medical complications and a replacement has not yet been identified. This gap has caused the CARPE SO Team to rely heavily on short-term administrative and technical support from a variety of sources and has substantially taxed the available management resources. It is expected that the deputy director position will be filled by Fall 2005. However, staffing problems are expected to be chronic and will limit the SO Team's oversight and coordination functions.

Because USAID does not have direct agreements with regional host governments and is physically present only in the DRC and Rwanda, an important CARPE challenge is to facilitate positive interaction amongst the US embassies, the implementing NGO partners and the host governments. Given the Program's staffing constraints and the management needs spanning several countries, it is a challenge to evenly address the political, management, administrative, and technical demands of the program.

SO: 605-001

SO Title: Reduce the Rate of Forest Degradation and Loss of Biodiversity through Increased Local, National, and Regional Natural Resource Management Capacity

Program Title: Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP)

Status: Continuing

Indicator	Weight	Baseline Year	Baseline Year Data	Progress Direction + or -	FY2001 Actual	FY2002 Target	FY2002 Actual	FY2003 Target	FY2003 Actual	FY2004 Target	FY2004 Actual	FY2005 Target	Date Last Quality Assess
Number of different use zone within landscapes with sustainable management plans	4	2003	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	
Number of landscapes or other focal areas with forest cover assessments	4	2003	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	

Annex H: Partner comments on draft assessment

Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization: African Wildlife Foundation (AWF)

Contact Person: Adam Henson;
1400 16th St. NW #120; Washington, DC 20036 USA; Tel. 202.939.3322 (w); 202.491.1459 (c)

Background and program history

CARPE Small grants: AWF would like to re-emphasize the strategic importance of the small grants program for maximizing results through local partners in the Maringa-Lopori/Wamba (MLW) landscape. We did not face problems in receiving funds from the grant program, and significant progress was made in strengthening local partnerships in the MLW through these grants.

Progress made in meeting the three IRs: AWF takes exception to the statement on pg. 23: “None of the implementing partners are reporting on indicators 1.3 and 1.4...”. In fact AWF is implementing planned activities under these IR’s which are presented in the FY06 annual report monitoring matrix. It is true that only in year 3 have we been in a position to adequately address these intermediate results, but we are now achieving results for these IR’s and will be reporting on these in the FY06 annual report.

Assessment of Program Performance

No comments.

Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

Country level coordination: AWF has found country level coordination to be less than optimal in DRC, primarily due to absence of an effective CARPE Focal Point for DRC. This function within the CARPE management structure should be given renewed urgency for the remaining period of CARPE II and into the future.

Roles/effectiveness of Focal Points: AWF strongly agrees with the last bullet point under conclusions on pg. 37. Placing focal points within partner NGOs can potentially create problems where the interests of NGO’s and CARPE are intertwined. This scenario should be examined closely when determining future placement of Focal Points.

Assessment of Strategic Design

Problems with small grant mechanism: AWF takes exception to the statement “small grants have made little impact” on pg. 46 in the section detailing the problems with the small grant mechanism. On the contrary, this program has proven to be a crucial component of the MLW landscape program as these modest funds have greatly strengthened our local NGO partnerships. AWF had no problem with this mechanism and we commend USAID for making these funds available to CARPE partners. We would argue that these funds have made a strong impact in the MLW landscape, and we re-emphasize the urgent need to continue supporting this program in the future.

Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

No comments.

A. CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL

CARPE Assessment comments

Overall we believe that this assessment provides a very complete and thorough analysis of the CARPE program. It is also very fair and balanced. We agree with the overall recommendations to strengthen this key USAID program, and with the assessment's concerns regarding management, sustainability and local capacity building.

Many of our comments (see below) reflect our wish to have the report address the structural and design reasons that we believe may have led to a certain neglect of the capacity building IR. Additionally, we would like to see the report fairly recognize CI's efforts and approach, which aims precisely at addressing those management, sustainability and local capacity building issues.

We also would like to see the assessment report emphasize the need for a management planning and implementation system that is simpler and more effective. We are concerned that the frequent revisions of the management systems, the increasing complexity of the reporting documents and the focus on short-term (6-month) benchmarks have resulted in a virtual neglect of IR 2 and IR 3. This may create a negative incentive for implementing NGOs to increase their staffing structures, neglect local institutional capacity building and focus on ticking the boxes in the matrix. This outcome is counterproductive to CARPE's stated SO of "Reducing the rate of forest degradation and loss of biodiversity *through increased local, national, and regional natural resource management capacity*" (italics added).

Executive Summary: The management and planning demands of CARPE has clearly overwhelmed the Kinshasa office. The assessment underplays the delays in funding approvals and the confusion this has caused. It also underplays that the planning design is too elaborate and detailed for the installed capacity currently available to USAID.

Executive Summary: No mention of the fact that in 2005 alone USAID went through four significant revisions of the planning format. The latest version of the planning format made incorporating capacity building awkward, in particular by eliminating the budget allocations to IR2 and IR3. It is unclear how these results will be achieved if the format forces all budgets to be allocated to IR1.

Executive Summary: CI's activities have emphasized IR 2 & 3 to an extent that is not clearly acknowledged in the Executive Summary.

Pages 14-15: The assessment mentions the Tayna Center for Conservation Biology (TCCB) as an example of university training. We would like it to also include the development of the new Biodiversity Institute at the National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE).

Page 15: Accomplishments in GIS are an example of how the current planning and managing system encourages short-term results with limited sustainability and impact, but high visibility. The GIS data at UM is not ground truthed, and therefore is of limited reliability, and is not of much benefit to local institutions without the infrastructure in telecommunications required to access the data. Buying hardware and installing software is visible, but does not create long-term local capacity independent of foreign NGOs and should be discounted as a real accomplishment.

Page 29: The assessment states that only AWF has had success with subgrants to NGOS. We would like to call to your attention the fact that CI has provided significant subgrants to local NGOs such as TCCB, the community organizations under UGADEC and Vie Sauvage using international implementing NGO partners such as DFGFI and BCI as technical and administrative hubs on the ground.

Page 32: The assessment mentions the "striking exception of CI which is virtually not present in the region". On several occasions we explained that CI's approach to limit its staffing growth is the result of a global institutional strategy that primes the work with partners and the building of local capacities through significant funding transfers rather than the unsustainable expansion of its own operative structures. This approach is consistent with addressing the concerns stated elsewhere in the report about limited capacity building for local institutions, as well as their financial and institutional sustainability.

In all fairness, the report must also mention that at the time of the assessment, the key CI field position was vacant due to the relocation of the incumbent for family reasons. The new director has already been identified and should be in place by February-March 2006.

Page 35: The assessment says several times (also in the executive summary) that the presence of a long-term NGO presence is positively correlated with achievement of short-term benchmarks. While this may be true, the assessment also reports that established NGOs show “a preference...to use the talents and skills . . . of their own organization”. If NGOs do all the implementing they may also undermine local capacity by not allowing local institutions and agencies to play independent and responsible roles.

Page 35: The assessment suggests that funds can be bundled and go through the landscape leader without additional fees or overhead, but does not mention that CI is the only NGO that is already doing precisely that, through provisions in its existing NICRA agreement with USAID. By eliminating double dipping in overhead costs, this approach maximizes the resources going directly to the field.

Page 37: Strong agreement with the ineffectiveness of focal points. The hiring of Focal Points within NGOs may also affect the way they are perceived by other partners. As things stand now, it is difficult to differentiate them from the employees of the NGOs where they are embedded, and their fairness and objectivity may be perceived as compromised.

Page 39: Strong agreement that USAID has not provided sufficient management and technical capacity to play a supporting role given the scope of the undertaking. Instead, the Kinshasa office has often generated delaying bureaucracy and confusion. (For example, four versions of the planning and reporting matrix were requested from the implementing NGOs in a single year.)

Page 41: Working through established conservation partners is a sound strategy, but this approach strengthens the implementing NGO at least as much or more than the local government agencies, undermining the goal of building local capacity.

Page 44-45: Agreement with the assessment’s critic that the landscape unit as an implementation unit in “preparing and implementing landscape plans following an integrated land use planning process” has no fit to existing government structure and management, and is unlikely to have any attention after outside funding stops.

Page 45-46: Strong agreement with the assessment conclusion that the landscape approach has limited local buy-in and fits awkwardly with existing local management structures. This has also led to an awkward fit with capacity building when capacity building takes place at a country-scale outside the landscape. EG and DRC have both suffered from this by having their “country matrix” budgets, which included important capacity building activities, eliminated through what appeared to be an oversight.

Page 46: The assessment states that “However, program balance does not yet adequately address broader issues of program financial and institutional sustainability.” CI is addressing this through capacity building and trust funds. Unfortunately, a change in formats (and an apparent oversight) led to IR2 and IR3 activities being eliminated from the budget.

Page 47: The assessment recognizes TCCB as an example of capacity building outside of the landscape. This is incorrect. The TCCB is located within the landscape, but naturally not inside protected areas. UNGE would be a much better example for off-landscape capacity building.

Page 48: The assessment states that “Financial sustainability cannot be expected at this time but Implementing NGOs clearly need to be operating with institutional development plans that include a continuing reduction in the need for their presence”. We would like the assessment to recognize that CI’s strategic approach is specifically geared towards this outcome.

Page 51: The contributions from the NRM/Remote sensing activities have been limited and any interpretation of these data without significant groundtruthing would be of limited value.

Page 51: Focal points would be able to play a more important role in liaison with governments only if their capacity and stability is significantly improved.

Page 51: The recommendation to “Recognize and plan for a long term need to achieve program sustainability” is a valid one. However, to achieve this outcome, the report should suggest a revision of the existing program design that primes short-term (6-month) results over long term impact, and that undermines local responsibility by supporting and encouraging foreign NGOs to take an implementing role through concepts that do not match local structures (e.g. landscapes), often at the expense of longer-term capacity building focused on local institutions and existing structures.

Various: Please include the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund International (DFGFI) in the List of Abbreviations and Dr. Patrick Mehlman (VP of DFGFI) in Annex C.

Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization____USFS International Programs_____

Contact Person____Mike Chaveas, mchaveas@fs.fed.us, (202) 273 4744_____

Background and program history

The USFS is referred to as providing assistance on “landscape planning and forestry” (p. 3). To be clear, the assistance that the USFS is providing to USAID/CARPE and its partners is in the area of land use planning processes for the landscapes, but also for the different use zones within those landscapes; protected areas (including national parks management planning), community use zones, and extraction zones (not only forestry, but mining as well). Perhaps more appropriate and more descriptive, ‘US Forest Service: multiple use planning at the landscape scale addressing community use, protected area, and extractive zones’.

Throughout the document, reference is made to a lack of direct engagement with host country government agencies. To a reader who may not be familiar with the region, this point may stand out in the assessment as a glaring failure of CARPE. More background should be given on why the direct involvement of governments is limited in some countries, what the challenges are for such involvement.

Assessment of Program Performance

B. i. Page 13, 4th paragraph: talks about US Federal Agencies support to national institutions implying the limitations are specific to the US government agencies themselves. Limitations of host country government capacity, willingness, corruption at many levels are not cited as limitations to capacity building and should be to give a fair assessment of national capacity building.

Page 14 under Forest Concessions: should mention that USFS secured a USAID GDA grant to develop a reduced impact logging program for the Congo Basin. These funds were designed to be complementary to CARPE objectives.

Under section B, Capacity Building, the sub-heading of “national staff working at national level” (p. 14) describes government to government capacity building efforts, but fails to mention two key capacity building programs where the USFS has worked directly with host country government agencies:

In Gabon, the USFS has delivered three workshops (a fourth is occurring this week, Feb 6-10, 2006) on the creation and refinement of national park management plans, resulting in drafted plans for Lope and Loango National Parks which will serve as models for the other 11 NPs of Gabon. These workshops have also included training on the creation of annual workplans for these parks. These workshops were delivered directly to CNPN staff in Gabon.

In ROC, the USFS has sent two teams to provide GIS training to CNIAF, working with WRI and WCS, and to work on Information Needs Assessments and developing Protected Area landcover datasets.

Under “training in natural resources monitoring” (p. 15) the statement is made that “GIS software was provided to the Forestry School through the USFS”. This statement is not complete nor entirely correct. The USFS sponsored three grant requests of GIS software and hardware for distribution in Gabon from ESRI-USA (2 grants) and Leica Geosystems (1 grant), all of which were approved in full. ESRI-France also approved a USFS request for the French language package. This software and hardware was distributed to CNPN, WWF and WCS in Gabon, not to a Forestry School as the text indicates.

Only outlined what federal agencies did but didn't evaluate their performance or its appropriateness for the objectives.

Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

Federal Agencies: the last paragraph within this section implies all federal agencies activities are less than satisfactory; it would be far more useful to identify the weaknesses so those particular agencies know where to improve or can guide what agencies to keep. Referring to all federal agencies doesn't allow for targeted criticism.

Page 32, third bullet in Conclusions: USFWS are not providing their own earmarked funds, these funds came from CARPE and were transferred to USFWS because of Congressional pressure. These funds should be under the same rigor as USAID Funds. It is unfortunate this was not evaluated because it took money away from the agency that was trying to focus government monies specific to objectives. It is not clear that the USFWS earmarked funds will be as rigorous and targeted.

Assessment of Strategic Design

Page 42. Not sure can agree with the assumption that unsustainable forest exploitation can be regulated by policy – China is a heavy hitter in the region and is not under certification pressure as are European companies. There is not a level playing field when government forestry institutions are not transparent or under international scrutiny. Pressure should be put on national governments to enforce standards in their forestry operations so all companies must abide to the same regulation. No one within CARPE is addressing this issue.

Section D, the first bullet under Conclusions (p. 47) states that the USFS impact has been primarily in building NGO's capacity rather than on Water and Forest departments or National Parks Agencies. This is not an accurate statement, as a significant piece of our success to date has come in regards to boosting the capacity of Gabonese Parks Council (CNP) staff (both Libreville based management staff and the conservators of individual parks) in regards to understanding management planning processes for protected areas and in the creation of management plans. While we are working more directly with NGOs in DRC, where government capacity and presence is lacking, this is not true across the region. The attempt is to outline templates for land use planning and do it with cooperative partners to be able to identify the necessary planning steps specific to the Basin.

Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

Under "Improve Landscape Performance" (p. 50) the last sentence of 2nd paragraph lists the diversity of skills needed within implementing NGOs. Management skills are not listed.

Under "...Cross cutting program components" (p. 50), the recommendation is made that leads would be responsible for activities outside of landscapes. Should they not also be responsible for recommendations and coordinations between landscapes?

Bushmeat (p. 51): The recommendations seem to focus on the supply side of the issue only, without any recommendations for addressing the demand side in large regional towns that serve as markets for commercial bushmeat hunting.

Under "Improved program management" (p. 52) the recommendation is made that USAID/CARPE staff should be bolstered, but there is no recommendation for removing the cap of \$1 million that can be spent on program management.

The first bullet of "Recognize plan for long term need to achieve program sustainability" (p. 54) suggest an exit or scale down strategy for the international NGOs as CARPE II progresses. However, I think it's safe to assume that these NGOs will be on these landscapes after CARPE ends.

There is a reference in the Exec Summary as well as this section that CARPE should focus less attention on parks and more on threats and opportunities in forest concessions and communities. In principle, the assumption may be right but it would be better to suggest that landscapes focus on where the most prevalent and urgent threats are, regardless of their location. This also should be said for what types of partners should work on a landscape. The report sometimes implies that there should be a diversity of partners. This diversity should directly respond to the most pressing landscape issues.

From: JPielemeie@aol.com

Sent: Friday, February 03, 2006 5:07 PM

To: vletelier@weidemannassoc.com; fsowers@verizon.net; cstoney@winrock.org

Subject: Fwd: CARPE mid-term evaluation: Draft Report Feedback

In a message dated 2/3/2006 4:59:55 P.M. Eastern Standard Time, Rudy_DAlessandro@nps.gov writes:

John -

Responding for NPS, I have the following edits to Annex 6 - CARPE Budget by Partner:

Year 3 funding from USAID to NPS is just \$25,000, bringing our USAID total to \$75,000. By our calculations, in-kind contributions (for salaries) and donations of NPS surplus equipment & supplies totalled an additional \$30,000. Thus the Total amounts for NPS should read: USAID = \$75,000; Match Funds = \$30,000.

sincerely,
Rudy

Rudy D'Alessandro
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Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization__Smithsonian Institution/Missouri Botanical Garden (SI/MBG)__

Contact Person_____Alfonso Alonso aalonso@si.edu Tel. 202-633-4780_____

Overall Comments:

Putting together a report like this is an enormous job, and the review team should be congratulated on your effort. As such, a longer period to review the document should have been granted.

It seems like as if SI/MBG were at a disadvantage not only from being relatively new to CARPE but also from being interviewed early and providing input on an issue that is controversial within CARPE, namely biodiversity. We suspect that our comments got submerged in the vast amount of information that the review team obtained subsequently, and thus it is not represented in the report.

The review team indirectly criticizes the SI/MBG "track record" vs. other cross-cutters. Evidently, the team is not aware of the response received from landscape leaders to our services, and the findings recorded in our reports (e.g. Gabon Monts de Cristal, in both English and French, Nouabale-Ndoki National Park report, in both English and French, Cameroon SE timber certification, Cameroon Lac Lobeke monitoring, Monte Mitra Multi-Taxa Assessment, and SI/MBG FY 04 and FY05 workshop reports; all submitted to CARPE headquarters, and one attached as a reference). We thus feel that the review team has not sufficiently emphasized the importance of the SI/MBG contribution to biodiversity, forest monitoring and ground-truthing, nor our large and on-going efforts to train landscape biodiversity teams and to establish long-term support for their activities. Also, the review team apparently does not recommend SI/MBG for future funding, and fails to consider the implications of removing CARPE's biodiversity component, especially as this relates to progress on the SO.

It is also pertinent to mention that SI/MBG came new to CARPE in Phase 2 as biodiversity organizations, partly because the evaluation report on Phase 1 identified a large gap in CARPE and regional capacity to inventory and monitor biodiversity, an essential on-going core activity of sustainable forest management. It has taken us a while to discover how we can best contribute to CARPE, but the reports, especially from FY 05 showed that we have made big advances and are developing a niche that is helping CARPE to greatly improve performance in biodiversity conservation and monitoring.

The Phase 1 review noted that CARPE was very weak in biodiversity expertise, and recommended that the SI and the MBG join CARPE as biodiversity organizations, to balance the big NGO's with a focus in megafauna. We joined, and in two years of partnership in CARPE we have made great strides in adding a biodiversity component to the program, helping to support the statement in the report that "CARPE is on-track to protecting biodiversity." Biodiversity is important to CARPE because of the emphasis placed on it by Congress through the SO.

We are also very surprised that the review team failed to identify the importance of biodiversity to the CARPE program, especially as this was raised as a specific concern in the Phase 1 review. In our opinion as biodiversity experts, the establishment of biodiversity inventory and forest monitoring as a cross cutting activity led by SI/MBG is central to achieving the CARPE SO, and biodiversity needs to be much better integrated into the overall program, especially through the adoption of a credible basin-wide approach to biodiversity inventory, monitoring and conservation within landscapes, and the establishment of quantitative benchmarks for biodiversity inventory at the landscape level. Please find attached a recent SI report that shows the importance of the work that we are accomplishing.

Please correct SI name: Smithsonian Institution

It is appealing to read how much you thank technical advisor for Gamba when you and Carol Stoney knew that he purposely blocked SI from that meeting and used our lab and resources for his benefit. One thing is to be polite but the other is to ignore proven facts. Please rewrite that portion of the acknowledgements.

Background and program history

Clarification: the 11 landscape approach did not come out of the WWF Libreville workshop. This workshop simply gathered a large number of people together to identify priority conservation areas. Many of the highest priority areas for forest biodiversity were near the coast of Cameroon for example, and these are not included in any CARPE

landscape. The 11 landscape selection was more political than biological, selecting large, remote tracts of land where the large NGO's felt they could best implement megafauna protection.

Assessment of Program Performance

We agree with much of what the report says, however, we do not think that the review team gave a balanced consideration to all partners involved. Most of the examples, by nature of their site visits, come from WWF or organizations with an office in Kinshasa. The lack of strong mentioning of SI/MBG mean that the team was not fully informed. We recommend for the team to pick more representative examples.

We do not agree with the review team's statements that landscapes are on-track with biodiversity inventory. It is certainly true that there are impressive megafauna monitoring efforts underway, but for the tens of thousands of other species we are not aware of any coordinated, structured inventory and monitoring outside of the SI/MBG program.

The CARPE landscapes are very large and contain estimated tens of thousands of species of plants and animals, many listed as rare, vulnerable, threatened, endangered, insufficiently known, or new to science. The identification and conservation of these species is central to the SO, and is also required through other US laws such as NEPA. In two years SI/MBG have been starting to establish a credible approach to biodiversity, focused on plants and vegetation, which are much better indicators of biodiversity conservation value than megafauna. We are laying the basis for the long-term inventory and monitoring needed to create the coarse scale zoning and the subsequent management within these zones, much of which will require a strong biodiversity conservation component.

Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

We agree with the report that the market based idea of cross-cutting activities has failed, not in principle but in its implementation. The big NGO's that received most of the funding have their budgets allocated and thus had trouble redirecting funds to cross-cutting activities. The organizations cited as successful in the report have a long CARPE funding presence that gave them more flexibility. We have been unfairly evaluated against longer-funded players, who have at times, significantly larger funding. SI/MBG thus should be included in the groups for continued funding since we have proven evidence that landscape leaders "demand" our services, they just had their budgets planned for other activities and thus hard to redirect.

Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

The main issue with the report is that it only puts forward four activities which should be the focus of the next funding round of CARPE: capacity building, policy, bushmeat, and remote sensing. It is argued that "completion of biodiversity and socio-economic analyses coupled with several years of on-the-ground experience should enable landscape partners to identify the key threats and focus their work plans on addressing those threats." The work that needs to be done to address these threats is far from complete!

It is argued that CARPE has enough information to continue with their goals. A very clear explanation on how they know that to be the case needs to be presented in the document.

CARPE is hardly addressing the root cause of forest degradation – deforestation along roads and near settlements – and sustainable forest management does not reduce forest degradation per se, since it contains both economic and ecological components that need to be balanced. For example, a common silviculture technique to improve timber yields and reduce logging damage is through the removal of lianas, and our research has shown that these make a great contribution to the diversity of the African forest canopy. Sustainable forest management should continue to be a focus of CARPE and should be lead by SI/MBG.

The other big component that needs to be incorporated is on the ground biodiversity monitoring. How do you know that policies and actions are being successful? To achieve biodiversity conservation, a credible inventory of the biodiversity precedes zoning, and biodiversity monitoring is part of the on-going core program. In the limited approach for megafauna protection, the biodiversity inventory is largely limited to megafauna and its habitat and zoning does not accommodate other biodiversity. CARPE is currently mostly focused on implementing the latter approach. Although the disconnect between megafauna protection and biodiversity conservation is globally recognized, there are at least three studies in the CARPE area that demonstrate that large protected areas alone do not protect the biodiversity of a landscape. These are a SI studies in the Gamba Complex, a PhD thesis on Campo-Ma'an by Peguy Tchouto, and

detailed floristic studies on Mount Cameroon. All of these studies found important biodiversity outside the existing protected areas. All these studies support biodiversity inventory and monitoring as an integral and on-going part of landscape management, and not an activity that ceases when the zoning begins.

Our contribution is to introduce landscape-scale biodiversity inventory and monitoring as an on-going component of land use planning, through field missions, training and capacity-building. We are also building network capacity to enable landscape managers to access and use the data, and for the information to be used for ground-truthing in landscape-scale vegetation monitoring.

Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization: UMD/NASA

Contact Person: Chris Justice (Washington) / Didier Devers (Kinshasa)

CARPE is complex and has always been a unique project within USAID, with multiple partners from diverse and distributed organizations with different expertise, roles and responsibilities making it difficult to evaluate. There is a steep learning curve and the assessment team should be congratulated on their report. The report is well constructed, shows good insight and identifies some of the more critical issues facing CARPE II and makes some useful recommendations.

The evaluation report should however include a caveat. It is hard for the report to adequately convey the enormous difficulties of working in this particular region, the lack of national and local capacity and infrastructure, the size of the landscapes and the paucity of data and information and the incredible effort and length of time needed to effect any sustained change. What in the US would be routine, relatively cheap and easily executed tasks, can often be extremely arduous, expensive and time consuming in this region. The personal dedication and commitment of the CARPE field staff cannot be overstated.

The assessment focuses on organizational issues and process and raises some important issues which the CARPE partners need to resolve. However, there are three issues which I believe are critical to the next phase of CARPE which were missing or insufficiently addressed.

- **The need for improvement in the systematic data collection, management, open sharing and dissemination of the data and information collected by CARPE partners.**
- **The strategic importance of the international State of the Forest (SOF) reporting process and the critical role of the CARPE landscapes in this activity.**
- **The current precarious status of US satellite assets for monitoring the Congo Basin Forests, the need for coordination of the international assets and the role of the Observatoire Satellital de la Foret d'Afrique Central (OSFAC).**

Aspects of these issues are relevant to sections II, III, and IV below. There are also some concerns about the potential project responses to the recommendations in section V.

- a) The general lack of information associated with the landscapes and heterogeneity of central Africa in general, gives emphasis to the need for the collection of primary data and information. Given the large investments associated with data collection in this region, it is important that as much use is made of the data as possible and that the data collected now are managed so that they can be used in the future to examine trends. In this respect a higher priority must be given to data management, access and dissemination. In CARPE I, a low priority was given to this aspect of the program due to budget constraints. With the increasing sums of money being spent on data collection, some investment and a serious commitment is urgently needed on data management and dissemination by the landscape partners. It was suggested at the outset of CARPE II that each landscape and partner identify an Information Officer responsible for managing and disseminating data and information with a minimum of overhead. This should now be implemented and the information officers should communicate to agree on data format and metadata standards and discuss data collection methodologies and protocols. A distributed approach to data management is suggested recognizing that technical support and backstopping can be provided through existing cross cutting partners. The CARPE Web Site and CARPE Mapper are resources which partners can use for data and information dissemination. Alternative approaches to data dissemination for partners with no internet connectivity are available. A discussion of the need for data sharing between partners and the broader community in the evaluation is a serious omission. Additionally, the CARPE Web Site is one of the primary outreach tools for the project, and the CARPE the landscape

information officers and partners need to be more proactive, making regular contributions, providing reports and significant results for dissemination.

- b) The State of the Forest process is extremely important for CARPE II and the future sustained monitoring of the Congo Basin Forests. The purpose of the State of the Forest Report is to summarize periodically the most recent findings and understanding of the state and utilization of the forest and its associated human and wildlife populations and biodiversity and the socio-economic and physical changes taking place. The State of the Forest report will also serve as a catalyst for data standardization, data management, and, eventually, data dissemination. The report is intended for multiple audiences but is targeted at this time at national and regional resource and development agency managers and policy makers. Clearly information contained in such an assessment can be packaged for raising broader public awareness. In the process of developing the 2005 report it was recognized that the CARPE project is just one of a number of large regional programs and national initiatives addressing this general topic and that an international assessment in the framework of the CBFP is highly desirable and unique in this region. It was also recognized that there is an urgent need to move beyond anecdotal description of local conditions or processes to quantitative and representative measurement of trends. It was recognized that in the longer term COMIFAC would be the logical institutional home for such an assessment and the associated sustained monitoring of the forests is of direct interest at the regional and national levels. The State of the Forest process and putting in place the associated monitoring systems, is as important as the reports themselves. The process which has gained broad international support is currently focusing on identifying the appropriate and practical indicators and the associated data collection needs. CARPE has been a partner in developing the SOF process and will need to continue to be active in refining and periodically updating the indicators. The Landscape partners will need to be the primary source for the CARPE findings and understanding to the SOF reporting. It should be noted that with the current program reporting procedures for the CARPE, it is extremely hard to extract significant results and findings and the supporting data and that this needs to be resolved with some urgency.
- c) Satellite remote sensing and GIS are no more than tools for monitoring and analysis but are particularly important for CARPE given the geographic extent of the region and spatially explicit nature of resource management. It should be noted that use of satellite data is most effective when combined with ground-based field measurements. The workhorse for forest monitoring by satellite in this region has been the NASA Landsat system. Since the beginning of the CARPE program, NASA resources have been leveraged to provide data for the Basin to CARPE and international partners alike. The situation is different for other international assets and partners which have been unable to share data, as they are constrained by commercial interests and copyright. The current instrument Landsat 7 malfunctioned in 2003 resulting in limited utility of the data. With support from NASA, UMD has been acquiring data for use by the Project from alternative data sources i.e. ASTER and MODIS. NASA and the USGS are now embarking on a project to compile a mid-decadal global data set (2004-2006 epoch). This initiative includes participation of international partners including the possibility of Landsat 5 acquisition from an antenna in Malindi. This will be an important USG contribution to CARPE and CBFP alike. On December 23rd 2005 NASA was charged by OSTP, with developing and launching a Landsat Continuity Mission which hopefully will provide data through 2012 to enable the long term monitoring of forest trends. Other countries have satellites which could provide data for monitoring the Congo Basin Forests e.g. India, Argentina, Brazil, China. The case for international coordination of satellite monitoring is being made by OSFAC through the international GOF/GOLD program. OSFAC also plays an important role in distributing satellite data to national agencies and organizations, coordinating training workshops and through a regional network of national points of contact is documenting satellite monitoring projects in the region. CARPE has developed close partnership with the EU FORAF program in the area of satellite forest monitoring and training.

How the evaluation recommendations are responded to will be extremely important to the continued effectiveness of the program. There are two examples which come to mind:

- i) The success of CARPE I was largely a result of allowing the CARPE partners to self organize through periodic meetings of the Strategic Objective Team, which consisted of the partner leads. In CARPE II the large increase in geographic scope and management responsibilities has meant that the Landscapes leads

have been consumed with internal landscape implementation issues and reporting with little time or priority for CARPE Project wide organization. So that there is not a disconnect between design and implementation, the CARPE II redesign team recommended in the evaluation must include the landscape and crosscut leads and consist of individuals intimately familiar with the realities of the region. Similarly the newly recommended support service contract personnel will need close and frequent communication with the various landscape and cross cutting leads.

- ii) The landscapes are essentially a NGO construct and there is both strength and weakness in the current disconnect between the landscapes and national or local authority and jurisdiction. The weaknesses being clearly singled out by the evaluation. The evaluation recommends that the landscape boundaries be more theroretical and flexible. If the boundaries are loosely defined and ever changing, then the current approach for reporting landscape statistics will need to be changed also.

Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization: Wildlife Conservation Society

Contact Person: Jefferson Hall (jhall@wcs.org) or James Deutsch (jdeutsch@wcs.org)

Overall Comments and Major Issues

As requested, we provide detailed comments and corrections below referencing each section of the report. We would like, however, first to highlight four overall comments which we believe to be of particular importance:

First, we congratulate the review team on the extraordinary accuracy and depth of their report, and we wish to state that we support the vast majority of the observations and recommendations contained therein. Just as the active involvement of the CTO in implementation of CARPE through his advice to CARPE partners has been invaluable and much-appreciated by the NGOs (as noted in the report), so much of the advice in the report will be immensely useful not only in designing the next phase of the program but to the NGOs themselves in improving the effectiveness of their implementation.

Second, we would like to point out that we believe the issues of the choice of and role of Landscape Leads to be vitally important. Landscape Leads were selected rapidly in March 2003 in response to the CTO's request for an individual and organization to coordinate discussions of approaches in each landscape prior to the beginning of the CARPE II implementation itself. At the time, the CTO stated that this function would be the limit of the Landscape Lead's responsibilities. Leads were chosen in some cases based on individuals' access during that month to electronic communications or rapid negotiation between available CARPE partners, rather than a considered effort to identify the NGOs most capable of carrying out the much wider roles of landscape planning and subcontracting now envisaged for Landscape Leads. We therefore recommend that the CTO now be empowered to assess the capacity and effectiveness of each Landscape Lead for this larger role. Where a particular Landscape Lead does not have a physical presence in the Landscape or where the CTO judges that the Landscape Lead does not have the capacity and experience to fulfill the role effectively, we recommend that the CTO be empowered to select an alternative Landscape Lead.

We would not support the proposal -- Option A on page 50 and in the Executive Summary -- that all Landscape funding be channeled through the Landscape Leads. Our experience of partnership amongst the four Lead NGOs (AWF, CI, WCS, and WWF) during both CARPE and other programs has shown that none of these NGOs has the legal and administrative capacity to negotiate and execute USAID subcontracts rapidly. Thus, structuring CARPE according to this proposal would result in delays of a year or more in implementing activities in some of the Landscapes. We believe that efficiency requires maintaining the current system of direct granting of USAID funds to each of AWF, CI, WCS, and WWF where one or more of these NGOs is working under the Landscape Lead of another.

Option B on page 50 (and in the Executive Summary), requiring formal approval from Landscape Leads of other NGO workplans and budgets within the Landscapes has already been partially implemented by the CTO. This can be effective if two pre-conditions are met: 1) the Landscape Lead has the expertise, experience, and on the ground presence to fulfill this role wisely, and 2) some kind of appeal mechanism is available -- probably to the CTO -- where disagreements are not readily reconciled.

We would recommend that Landscape Leads be required and assisted by USAID to formally convene all partners in the Landscape at least once a year, coordinated with the USAID workplanning and budgeting cycle, to plan and agree work by each partner. Continued serving as Landscape Lead should be conditional on effectively carrying out this role.

Third, we appreciate the aspiration of CBFP and CARPE to achieve conservation and sustainable development across the vast area of the 11 CBFP landscapes, comprising 36% of the Congo Basin land area. In some Landscapes, where

substantial other funds are becoming available and threats and constraints are limited, we believe this goal is achievable. In circumstances where resources are more limited and threats more severe, however, we believe that evenly distributing CARPE effort across Landscapes risks accomplishing little or nothing. Nor is the statement of the review team that substantial additional funds are available for protected area management accurate across the subregion. While funders such as the GEF and ECOFAC are poised to invest resources in some protected areas, for the majority of protected areas in the subregion CARPE remains the largest source of funds and the total funding level is and is likely to remain inadequate to provide for truly successful protected area management. These considerations justify the NGO's decision to focus our efforts initially on protected areas and to continue this focus in some Landscapes into the future. Thus, we strongly advise that drive to spread CARPE activities out of protected areas into the surrounding Landscapes be implemented flexibly depending on the circumstances in each Landscape.

Fourth, WCS believes that filling in of the PMP is not an adequate measure of the quality or effectiveness of landscape management at each CARPE-CBFP landscape. Indeed, we assume that this is why the CTO has personally visited most landscapes. At the beginning of the current phase of CARPE, the CTO stated that some re-allocation of resources would occur during the course of the three years on the basis of the quality and effectiveness of work at each site, and indeed this has occurred to some degree between year 2 and year 3 of the current phase. WCS applauds this adaptive management and results-oriented approach, and would support empowering the CTO further to re-allocate funds based on effectiveness.

Specific Comments

B. Acknowledgements

Please ensure that Jean-Remy Makana's name is spelled correctly.

C. Acronyms

Please add:

CEFRECOF, Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Conservation Forestière

CIB, Congolais Industrielle du Bois

CTFS, Center for Tropical Forest Science

CITIES, Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species

ENRA, Enzyme Refiner's Association

ICCN, Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature

MIKE, Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants

SOF, State of the Forest

Background and program history

a. Throughout the document there is reference made to NGOs' competitiveness and the stresses of collaboration. We recognize this and largely agree. One area where we feel the record is not accurately presented is on page 3, paragraph 2. The review infers that USAID may have been surprised to have only received one application for each landscape as opposed to having been presented with different proposals for each landscape. In fact, USAID strongly suggested that it expected only one application per landscape and that the NGOs should get together to decide amongst themselves landscape leadership. This actually represents extraordinary cooperation and collaboration among NGOs.

Assessment of Program Performance

a. WCS supports the idea of having a Landscape Leader with limited power comprising consolidation of workplans and reports submission to CARPE. Giving more power - especially over budgets - to the Landscape Leader will not solve the problem of poor coordination among Landscape Leaders. On the contrary this will exacerbate current conflicts, especially in the case where conflicts arise because of differences in conservation approaches and vision. We believe that the Ls Leader should be a facilitator rather than a Ls manager. With NGOs competing for funds, there is little hope that giving more power to the Ls leader is the solution to conflict arising, because some NGOs believe the leader has already too much power. Channeling all funds through the Landscape Leader will not only give the Ls

leader overwork but also increase conflicts between partners. We should therefore keep “USAID’s practice of segmenting landscape funding rather than channeling all funds through the Ls lead organization”.

b. Table 1. Under Landscape 2 (Gamba Conkouati), segment 2, WCS Gabon, Mayumba and Iguela are listed. Mayumba is a national park and Iguela is a site within Loango National Park. This should probably be changed to Mayumba and Loango NPs

c. Table 1. Under Landscape 10, WCS also works in Maiko National Park (over 200K a year CARPE funds). In addition, to the extent that Landscape boundaries are not “Berlin walls” and are flexible (as recommended in the document), WCS has spent significant USAID (Gorilla Directive) and USFWS funds working towards the development of a Community Conservation Reserve in the Itombwe Forest. This has been an extraordinary USAID success story in community conservation that seems to be ignored – perhaps because of the fact that the work was undertaken with USAID Gorilla Directive Funds.

d. Table 1. There is no assessment of Quality. This comment is applicable throughout the document. Assessment of performance is largely limited to filling in boxes within the PMP. MOVs (Means of Verification) are presented to CARPE by the NGOs but these can only give a partial assessment of the quality of the work undertaken – particularly as NGOs put their best foot forward. The CTO makes site visits and has some understanding of quality but nowhere is it reported systematically and publicly. This is particularly important, as the NGOs have always been led to believe that the CTO had the authority – and would use it – to reprogram funds in part based on the quality of the work. He does seem to have done this in year 3 when evaluating budget cuts.

e. In the Maiko-Tayna-Kahuzi Biega Landscape, the Landscape Lead (CI) has no implementing activities on the ground or presence in the Landscape or the country. As a result, the de facto Landscape Leader on the ground (Diane Fossey Gorilla Fund International) is a sub-recipient that does not have a cooperative agreement with CARPE or the experience or capacity to carry out this role effectively. This is also a source of conflict. WCS recommends that activities on the ground should be a prerequisite for Landscape leadership.

f. Page 7, paragraph 3, narrative reports also highlight major successes – of which there are many. We should avoid focusing on the negative.

g. Page 7, Conclusions, While they may be linked to protected areas, socio-economic surveys are conducted outside protected areas. This is one way that NGOs that seem to be only working within protected areas are indeed working outside protected areas. As WCS has explained to the CTO, we report this under the protected areas category of the PMP in Gabon, for example, in a large part because we do not as yet have the mandate to work outside protected areas (for reasons well known to the CTO). The CTO has thanked WCS for this explanation.

h. Page 7, Conclusions, It is important to note that simultaneous implementation activities while working towards convening a landscape planning process and adopting management plans has been agreed upon by the CTO. The reason for doing so is to assure that there is something left to conserve once management plans are finally adopted.

i. Sub grants should only be granted by the NGO lead in landscapes where there are 2 or 3 implementing partners. This will certainly reduce time for reporting. On the other hand, this will increase the NGO lead work.

j. Page 11, Capacity Building. In general there seems to be an under appreciation of the Smithsonian Institution’s activities as a crosscutting program. While it is up to the Smithsonian to comment and justify their activities, it may well be that their closest relationship has been with WCS. WCS does agree that some of what they have done has seemed to lack a strategic vision and does not fit well within the PMP. However, WCS has had a longstanding relationship with them that has been important. Please see below with reference to CTFS. Corneille Ewango, the 2005 recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize (one of the most prestigious environmental prizes), is a product of the WCS – CTFS (Smithsonian) collaboration. In addition, Smithsonian has been the leader in developing REBAC (the Central African Botanists Network of Le Réseau des botanistes d’Afrique Centrale). REBAC was created in 1999 with CARPE funding and was highlighted in a box in the Summary Report of the State of the Congo (the glossy version that was widely distributed). This has been an extraordinarily important capacity building activity that is also

important for biodiversity monitoring. The strategic vision of linking national researchers with international researchers has been explicitly outlined by WCS conservationists in published articles in *Conservation Biology* (available upon request). While REBAC is noted on page 14, we raise this larger issue here.

Many additional and substantial capacity building activities in CBFP landscapes have been carried out by the NGOs, including, for example, joint WCS-WWF training of wardens and eco-guards carried out for all of Gabon in the Gamba Landscape with Moore Foundation funds and the constructions and funding of a national training centre for wardens, eco-guards, and biologists at Lope Chaillu Landscape by WCS with funds from Total, the EU, and WCS private donors. An additional example, CEFRECOF in the Ituri Landscape, is discussed below.

k. Forest concessions. We would like to add a paragraph under this section: “In Ituri Ls, WCS is working with ENRA to control forest invasion by farmers in ENRA concession and to improve forest inventories and inventory techniques (SI/MAB sub-contract) in order to promote sustainable forest management practices”.

l. Page 15

WCS appreciates your reference to the Training Center in the Ituri Forest (CEFRECOF). The Centre de Formation et de Recherche en Conservation Forestière (CEFRECOF) is managed by WCS under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ICCN (Institut Congolais pour la Conservation de la Nature, DRC’s semi-autonomous Park’s Authority) and WCS. CEFRECOF was built in large part with USAID funds in the 1990s to serve as a field station and training center that could 1) host both national and international visiting scientists, 2) host field courses from the University of Kisangani’s Department of Conservation Biology and, 3) host training sessions for the ICCN and other government institutions on protected areas management and conducting biological surveys. It has been used for all of these purposes. A generation of Congolese protected areas managers and conservation biologists has passed through CEFRECOF. The University of Kisangani, which has an outstanding record of training Congolese in advanced degrees in Natural Resources Management, has held regular training courses here (only partially entrusted by the war in DRC). CEFRECOF has also hosted numerous national and international researchers and boasts a number Master’s and PhD Theses. In addition, CEFRECOF is also part of the Smithsonian Institution’s Center for Tropical Forest Science (CTFS) forest dynamics (also known as the large plot) network. This network links 17 plots across the tropics and was set up to understand natural forest dynamics in order to inform forest management. It is for this reason that WCS was subcontracted by the Smithsonian Institution to undertake work in the ENRA (Enzyme Refiner’s Association) timber company’s logging concession. The Ituri Forest plots are an extraordinarily important component of the CTFS network and research has forest management implications across Central Africa. We feel that it is unfortunate that USAID seems to have lost its institutional knowledge in reference to its own relationship with the creation of CEFRECOF – one that USAID should be proud of. We also fear that neither the Smithsonian nor WCS has done an adequate job of articulating how the long-standing CTFS research program fits into an extremely important crosscutting framework for forest management.

m. Page 16, Natural Resource Monitoring, WCS notes that the review team recognizes a lack of agreement on field based (as opposed to remote sensed) monitoring. However, we feel that an extraordinarily important program, the CITIES (Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species) mandated MIKE (Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants) program has been overlooked. MIKE survey methodology has been employed throughout most CARPE Landscapes in order to gain an understanding of the distribution and relative abundance of large mammals, including elephants. It has been the key component in informing the recent meeting among Central African Protected Area Authority Directors (held in Yaounde, Cameroon) to develop a strategy for protecting elephants in Central Africa. It has also informed the SOF (State of the Forest) process. The MIKE program is highlighted in the SOF Summary Report (referenced above).

n. Page 17. We should appreciate it being noted that WCS is a founding member of the Conservation Finance Alliance and has been working throughout the Congo Basin (and beyond) on sustainable financing.

o. Page 17, WCS has played a very important role in Forestry Policy. A number of WCS staff contributed to the WB Forest sector review document for DRC that is currently in draft form (and has been for 1 and ½ years). This is a major policy reform document in DRC and is the basis upon which WCS DRC Country Director LED the other NGOs

to get a letter written to President Kabila in support of the Forestry Code in DRC. It is a recognition of NGO collaboration that the CARPE review team cites this letter (page 31) in the document as coming from all NGOs.

p. Page 21. WCS has been mentoring a locally based NGO in Gabon (ASF, Aventure Sans Frontier) – through its NY based NGO mentorship program for 5 years. ASF plays a leadership role in conservation in Gabon, particularly in costal management activities. WCS also has its own NY based small grants program that provides funding for African researchers.

q. Page 25, Gabon has 13 new National Parks.

Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

a. Page 34, At the risk of appearing to manifest lack of cooperation among NGOs, it is worth pointing out that CI did not work on the ground in Central Africa before the US led CBF. This is important to note with reference to evaluating success – particularly since the CARPE review team points out that the most successful programs based where NGOs have experience and have been on the ground for some time.

Assessment of Strategic Design

a. On Page 43, paragraph 3, the CARPE Review Team suggests that a rebalancing of funds both between landscapes and within landscapes to other activities is possible without hurting the overall objectives of the program. The CARPE review team has said in conversations that they feel there is adequate funding for protected areas from a variety of sources. WCS feels that this is simply not true. In fact, CARPE funding is essential for protected areas management. We are unaware of a single protected area within Central Africa that is adequately funded. Most still have extraordinary funding gaps. There may be the ability for modest reprogramming of funds but any significant shift in funding risks a collapse of protected areas. While we all hope that governments will one day be able to adequately fund these areas on their own, this day is still a long way off. We are reminded that while these areas are critical to the development and well being of citizens within the country within which they are located, these areas are also internationally critically important for the suite of benefits they provide.

Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

a. The report suggested a shift from protected areas to areas outside protected areas. This shift implies that 1) Coordination with national governments is a reality and 2) CARPE has, at this stage, met one of its priorities “help countries develop a network of effectively managed national parks, protected areas and corridors”. We do not believe it would be accurate to state at the end of the current phase, in 2006, that the protected areas in which CARPE partners have been working are now “effectively managed”.

b. WCS believes that it is important for CARPE to develop clear relationship with national governments. Working outside protected areas will require close relationship with local governments who are in charge of natural resources management in areas outside PAs. Evidence has shown that there is a complete lack of capacity at that level. Changes expected from the new Code Forestier and the new Nature Conservation Law in DRC, for example, will not have a positive impact if building capacity within the government structures is not a clear and specific objective of the CARPE program.

c. There is a clear case where the Government has cooperated in areas outside PAs in Itombwe massif where WCS and WWF are supporting the creation of a community reserve. The two NGOs and other stakeholders (local chiefs) are working directly with the Ministry of Environment, Conservation de la Nature, Eaux et Forêts to create the Itombwe Community Reserve. A Working Group (WG) that parallels the PA’s CoCoSi has been created by the Government.

d. WCS recommends that the CARPE focal point should be full CARPE staff and should be independent of any single NGO (WWF in many countries, WCS in ROC). This will give more credit to his/her involvement in landscape activities.

WRI Comments on Draft Report of the CARPE II Mid-Term Assessment

The draft report of the CARPE II mid-term assessment provides a comprehensive review of partner initiatives/activities during the first three years of CARPE II and a good overview of performance and accomplishments to date. Given the complexity of CARPE, the number of participating US partners and African collaborators, the diversity of activities and investments, and the difficulty of operating in Central Africa, the assessment team did an outstanding job: capturing the principal achievements; recognizing both useful and less effective work; identifying some critical issues that need targeted attention; and developing options and recommendations to help ensure CARPE II meets its ambitious goals/objectives.

- The report notes the importance of capacity building to achieve the three IRs and the institutional strengthening work of some partners. It recognizes WRI-IGP's support to local policy-focused NGOs and civil society organization networks (principally in Cameroon, such as NESDA, but also neighboring Gabon, Congo, DRC) as well as to the parliament in Cameroon, some select committees (and the new environmental caucus), as well as individual legislators who represent CARPE-relevant constituencies. WRI-IGP has also worked closely with and supported individual policy analysts (independent researchers and analysts in local/international organizations); legislators in the sub-region; ministries and government departments; and local government leaders from several Central African nations.

The report also recognizes WRI-GFW training activities in monitoring and the need to further such efforts. Remote sensing technology is used in the sub-region to: monitor forest cover, area and change; assess logging activities within and outside timber concessions (especially in Cameroon, Congo); and support proper delimitations of forest concessions and protected areas. In this regard, the report should make specific reference to WRI-GFW efforts to provide up-to-date user-friendly information on forest resources at both the national (such as through the Interactive Forest Atlas of Cameroon) and sub-regional levels (COMIFAC, CEFDHAC). In addition to publishing reports of its findings/recommendations, WRI helps build the capacity of local and international NGOs, civil society organizations, Forest Ministry technicians and managers, local government representatives, and parliamentarians in Cameroon. These activities build various technical skills, provide new tools for better decision-making, raise awareness of forest conditions/trends, and promote government accountability. WRI-GFW also participates and occasionally contributes to regional remote sensing, GIS and mapping initiatives.

- As noted in the report, improving coordination and promoting collaboration of landscape partners and between landscape and cross-cutting partners will strengthen CARPE and increase the likelihood of success. The lack of collaboration between landscape and cross-cutting partners is due partly to different interests and expertise - with landscape partners focused on biodiversity conservation and park management, and cross-cutting partners emphasizing governance/policy matters and developing tools to support decision-making processes. The lack of collaboration is particularly problematic for achieving landscape-level results and for ensuring long-term CARPE affects. There are some notable collaborative efforts among CARPE partners, such as in the preparation of the State of the Forests Report. In addition, WRI, IUCN, and IFIA (Inter-African Forest Industry Association, a private forest industry interest organization, including logging/wood processing companies in Africa) are working together to design (and soon, implement) a forest concession monitoring system for Central Africa (FSC-style certification). CARPE partner collaboration to improve the behavior and practices of the private sector is particularly rare.

The report notes the disconnect between CARPE landscape boundaries and local administrative jurisdictions which may contribute to the limited role/involvement of local governments and public officials in IR 1 activities. Since landscapes lie within states, efforts divorced of government involvement risk being project-/place-based and abandoned when CARPE concludes. Local governments are especially important for landscape management because (democratic) decentralizations provide local leaders the discretionary authority needed to address locality-specific circumstances. Equally important, IR 1 efforts that sideline, marginalize, or perhaps even ignore local authorities can undermine governance/democratic reforms, including IR2 partners and their work.

- Natural resources drive national economies, rural livelihoods, and corporate profits. They are highly contested political commodities, a significant source of power and, as such, a powerful lever for engaging citizens in government and promoting systemic governance reforms. For the rural majority, access to land and local natural resources are principal democratic dividends. Governance reforms that institutionalize fundamental democratic principals are central to the long-term sustainability of CARPE outcomes/achievements, yet IR 2 receives relatively little CARPE attention/support. Many cross-cutting partners actively engage government institutions. In addition to WRI-IGP environmental governance work, WRI-GFW has MOUs with the Ministry of Forests in several countries. The MOUs provide WRI a direct relationship with and ensure “buy-in” from the national governments.

CARPE activities that involve appropriate government agencies/departments help re-legitimize the state. Rather than work only with those actors that exercise power, CARPE partners should engage those institutions where legitimate authority over landscape-relevant decisions resides. For example, CARPE law reform initiatives should include the parliament (the supreme lawmaking body in each Central African country), not just the line ministries, sectoral agencies, attorney general’s office, or cabinet. Further, CARPE must focus on both process and outcomes. Strengthening environmental governance – improving process, not just policy – will help ensure that appropriate structures and proper procedures are institutionalized for effective future decision-making. Democratic procedures more often lead to public policies that reflect majority views, effective policy implementation and law enforcement, limited corruption/violent conflict (including limiting illegal logging, nature-based patronage, etc.). Such efforts will both legitimize CARPE accomplishments and strengthen democratic reforms.

In Central Africa, the environment – and therefore, CARPE investments - has instrumental utility in shaping systemic governance reforms. On p.18, the report concludes that, “(s)everal broader policy issues affect CARPE landscapes, but cannot be directly addressed by CARPE”, including effective decentralization of government authorities. WRI-IGP’s work on decentralization, on legislative representation, civil society oversight (transparency, accountability), and other governance matters is powerful precisely because it operates through an environmental lens and seeks to democratize natural resource management. CARPE would do the development community a disservice by ignoring these powerful “secondary” democratic outcomes.

- Landscape approaches to biodiversity conservation recognize that the land outside protected areas is home to significant biodiversity and critical (as dispersal areas, migration routes) to the survival of wildlife within parks. Such approaches also bring attention to and provide unique opportunities for marshaling ecosystem goods/services for local development. The report notes the importance of balancing in-park and out-of-forest investments in the CARPE landscapes. The role of land, natural resources, and ecosystem services - of well-managed forestry concessions, sustainable agriculture, integrated ecotourism, etc. – in improving livelihoods and reducing poverty should be further emphasized in the report. CARPE partners should pay more attention to: promoting economic growth in the sectors/assets of the poor, rural people; creating new markets for natural products; ensuring fair distributions of market shares along commodity chains of commercial natural products (winners and losers); and fair appropriations of nature-based public revenues, such as Cameroon’s timber concession revenue sharing schemes in Cameroon. Pro-poor budgeting can not only reduce poverty/inequity, but create incentives for local people to support environmental management and sustainable development. WRI is addressing these and other equity, poverty and environment issues in Central Africa. For example, in Cameroon, we are developing maps that link poverty and the distribution of environmental benefits/costs to help assess inter- and intra-jurisdictional equity.
- Finally, a few comments on some administrative/management matters addressed in the report.
 1. Encouraging conservation-first partners to balance in-park investments with out-of-forest activities can be problematic. Few CARPE partners have the experience, expertise, mandate, or interests in

community development and poverty reduction. CARPE should consider engaging a new set of partners to address development matters.

2. The role of the proposed 'CARPE Support Contract' and how it might affect the work of existing partners is unclear. The report suggests that it will play an administrative, technical, coordinating, and perhaps facilitating role, but will it also have authorities over partners and their activities?
3. Having leaders spearhead the four (or more?) cross-cutting themes could be useful (especially to focus and coordinate investments), but the report is not clear how they would operate. Would they have similar responsibilities and authorities (over budgets, programs) as landscape leaders? WRI is well positioned to lead both the 'policy and governance' and the 'NRM/Remote Sensing' themes.

Mid-Term Assessment of CARPE II

Comments on Draft Final Report

Organization__ World Wildlife Fund_____

Contact Person__ Allard Blom (allard.blom@wwfus.org)_____

Executive Summary

1. In the opening paragraphs no where is it acknowledged that the US commitment to CBFP was in fact a Presidential Initiative and that both the US and South Africa jointly launched this in Johannesburg.
2. We believe that the authors could do a better job of recognizing that different landscapes are at different stages of the process. New landscapes – such as Salonga LS and Lac Tumba LS in DRC - are still at the partner identification stage. It is incorrect to state for start up LS, for example, that we have not "effectively addressed the capacity building objective" or that we have not involved development organizations when, in actuality, we are at the stage of doing exactly that. We think the remarks are most relevant for older, more established field sites
3. Along the same line though, it is also import to stress that the authors do not at all recognize partners outside of the CARPE structure that are often active in these areas. For example WWF has specifically partnered with GTZ in both CAR and Cameroon to address rural development, socio-economic and livelihood issues. Additionally, we have received substantial support in that landscape for health and BaAka related issues from both Sacharuna Foundation and Johnson & Johnson.
4. Under “CARPE Program Performance to date” Policy section, does not mention the **Brazzaville Summit**, a very important policy events. No mention of the **COMIFAC treaty, the TNS and TRIDOM transboundary agreements**. All these major policy successes are a **glaring omission** throughout the document.
5. Under "Programmatic Recommendations", first bullet point, we think we should add gradually in “Improve program balance by gradually focusing more...”
6. Under "Programmatic Recommendations", last bullet point, we think they mean "inter-landscape learning" not "intra-landscape learning"
7. Under: g: Develop a more precise approach to balancing conservation and development activities in landscape: The evaluators are suggesting 5-10% of CARPE funding for development. In fact, we recommend that level of funding should be matched by development institutions. This is already the case in TNS for example with a partnering with GTZ. Also, there are much more funding available for development than for conservation and the evaluators should not over emphasized the role that development can play.
8. On page 2 of the Executive Summary, third paragraph, and on page 7, second paragraph, the evaluators state that “the implementing NGOs have limited relationships with government agencies that have the legal authority to work in the landscapes areas that are not PAs” and “Others, especially in Gabon, said that they only have agreements with government to work with national park agencies...”. This is not correct as far as WWF Gabon is concerned; we have agreements with the Ministry responsible for non protected areas and are closely working with Ministry staff (some of them are even based in our offices). On that basis, WWF has made, for instance, significant progress on bush meat control outside protected areas and, generally is implementing an integrated landscape approach.
9. We understand that there might be some rationale for increasing the importance of IR 2/IR 3 as well as development initiatives, but would like to emphasize that funding for action on the ground is critical if one wants to achieve conservation results. The danger of allocating part of the CARPE funding to development activities is that we will have diminished conservation and no significant development impact given the scale of the development challenges.

Background and program history

1. Page 1, last sentence: negatively instead of natively.
2. As mentioned in our earlier comments the COMIFAC Treaty is not mentioned and should be in the second paragraph, page 1.
3. Page 2, second paragraph: the priority workshop did in fact not determine the 11 landscapes. It determined the conservation priorities for the Congo Basin, which include the 11 landscapes. They were defined later based on the result of the workshop. This distinction is important because some important areas are not covered in the 11 landscapes.
4. Table 1 (p.6): several factual mistakes and omissions:
 - a. Gamba Conkouati: WWF is LL not SL
 - b. TRIDOM: WWF is LL not SL
 - c. Sangha Tri-National: WWF is LL, WCS is SL
 - d. Lac Tele- Lac Tumba: WWF is LL, WCS is SL
 - e. Salonga – Lukenie- Sankuru, 4th column: Not only is WWF the Landscape Leader but we are working in the landscape (versus "Salonga NP" as noted in this document). As for WCS, is not working in the landscape but instead have elected to work in the Salonga National Park.
 - f. The table is not clear as to whether it presents the progress expected by the end of the present phase (Sept 06). This clarification is required. If yes, for example for SLS it should read:
Ind 1: 60% of LU Process Convened
Ind 2: LUP Process Convened
5. Page 8 under effective integration, 3rd paragraph: the reference to the lack of trans-border coordination could be changed to say that “there has been a formal cross-border landscape meeting in August 2005, cross-border threats have been identified and a draft action plans to address these threats have been developed”.
6. Page 18, 3rd bullet point. The FORCOMS a rather controversial initiative, to such an extent that WWF has pulled out of this initiative.
7. Page 18, iv. Bush meat: Commercial bush meat trade not only negatively impacts wildlife but local community livelihoods, an important entry point for community collaboration. Furthermore we should also mention the ivory trade as having an important negative impact.
8. Page 20, first bullet point: we do not think the statement that: “Much of the bush meat.....” is an accurate statement, as the military involvement is prominent in DRC, but not much in the other countries of the region.
9. Page 20 "Gender", 1st paragraph and 1st line: “Landscape partners have not made gender a priority, primarily because they have had no responsibility to report on gender indicators.. Probably this sentence needs to be re-phrased. The evaluators seem to be insinuating that if we have to report on something it will become important. In other works conservation/NRM is not really what is driving our activities, but instead the report card from USAID.
10. Page 25, 4th paragraph: Insert co-initiated as mentioned earlier CBFP was initiated by the US and South African Governments.
11. Page 26, first line: we think you probably refer here to the Moore Foundation not MacArthur.

Assessment of Program Performance

1. Page 27, "last paragraph": We believe that CARPE/USAID could do a better job sharing information on other mission-funded programs with CARPE programs - this is in-line with comments on the need to better integrate partners with other expertise.
2. Page 29, point 2 under implementing NGO's: although we acknowledge we have experienced problems with funds control this was restricted to the Kinshasa office and did not occur in Yaoundé at all. Stricter controls were put in place and the CTO was kept informed and approved of those changes. No USAID funds went missing. New procedures have been put into place since to improve on our efficiency in cash transfers.

3. Page 30 under strategic planning: we would like to mention the notable exception of the TNS and to a lesser extent the TRIDOM landscapes. Certainly the joint TNS landscape and financial planning merit mentioning here as indeed in other places in the document.. The joint planning has been formalized in a tri-country agreement and the financial planning is forming the basis for the TNS trust fund. Both these initiatives have been repeatedly cited as models for the region and indeed are being replicated in for example TRIDOM.
4. Page 34, 2nd paragraph: From informal discussions with other LS leaders and partners, we think points "a) seemingly unending revisions of work plans throughout the year (especially a requested revision 2 weeks before the end of that years reporting period does not really seem justified)" and "b) changes in what needs to be reported in the PMP" merit mention in the conclusions.
5. Page 34, last bullet point under conclusions. WWF has contested the CTO on the issue of his requiring USAID approval for the small grants as we did not see any reference to this in the contracts. We are pleased to see that the authors seem to share our point of view that this too much micro-management.
6. Page 36, 2e paragraph last sentence under Roles and effectiveness of focal points: This seems to indicate that WWF was to blame for the delay, which was not the case. Delays were due to multiple problems at the level of USAID, WCS and WWF. Rather rephrase : due to significant delays in defining new contractual arrangements.

Assessment of Strategic Design

1. Page 43, 3rd paragraph. We would like to point out that CARPE is not the entire program of WWF. The same holds true for other NGO country programs. Even within the landscapes and certainly also outside of the landscapes significant additional funds come from non CARPE sources and in some cases even non CBFP. Although we acknowledge that USAID branding might at times have been insufficient, USAID on its part need to realize that and acknowledge (as is indeed in this report), we have been extremely successful in leveraging additional funding. This is also an objective under CARPE. More important however then either branding it for WWF, WCS or USAID is the branding of the landscapes as national programs.
2. Page 44, 3rd paragraph. The comment that the landscapes do not correspond to administrative mandates does not hold true for either Cameroon or CAR (and to our knowledge Congo, but WCS can clarify this point). Both in the case of TRIDOM and TNS in Cameroon there is a clear mandate under Government recognized management units that correspond to WWF's Jengi program. In CAR the Dzanga-Sangha protected area complex that is the landscape segment falls entirely under the mandate of one Ministry and the Ministry appointed National Director of the Dzanga-Sangha Project. Again the authors seem not to acknowledge the enormous differences in progress between LS. The older ones like TNS are often much more advanced then seem to be acknowledged in the report.
3. Page 45, 2nd paragraph: It is incorrect to state that landscape specific successes tend to remain bound within a given landscape. Certainly the experience of WCS in forest concessions in ROC or the WWF experience in Minkebe have been widely shared and modeled. Indeed improvements in sharing of lessons learned are welcomed.
4. Page 45, first bullet point under conclusions: Again this fails to acknowledge the tremendous progress that has been made in TNS and TRIDOM, where formal transboundary and national committees have been set up, which include provincial Government (prefect) and lower local level participation.
5. Page 46, under Problems with the small grant mechanism should be Gabon instead of Congo for the Gamba complex..

Recommendations for the Optimization of CARPE

First three general remarks:

1. Evaluation team missed out on many land-use planning (CBNRM, forestry concessions) examples from Cameroon, Lobeke in particular.
2. Future financial allotment should also reflect whether partners are working at the LS scale. In Salonga for example, WCS is not working on the LS scale..

3. Expenditures are not necessarily linked to performance or impact.
4. page 49, under programmatic recommendation, 3rd bullet: This does not take into account the considerable expertise and partners outside of CARPE such as GTZ and ECOFAC (EU)
5. page 49, under programmatic recommendation, 4th bullet: The authors do not acknowledge that this is in fact already happening (Cameroon is a good example to the point), but again different LS are at different stages and it is in our point of view a normal and needed growth process from PA towards the outside.
6. page 49, under programmatic recommendation, last bullet: again this should probably say inter instead of intra-landscape learning and we would also like to stress the need for formal LS teams such as have been established under the TRIDOM and TNS agreements.
7. Page 49, under tighten program focus, 2nd bullet: WWF has been working with RAPAC (the regional protected areas managers association under COMIFAC) on the peer review and capacity building process using the toolkit. In fact we have a joint funding proposal in with the Alliance with matching funds from the EU already committed.
8. Page 50 2nd paragraphs: By diluting the landscape aspect we risk of losing our focus. We are already integrating with administrative units and plans (see TNS and TRIDOM).
9. page 51, first paragraph: We need to strengthen indeed RAPAC (see point 7 above)
10. Page 51 under bush meat: WWF has already a proposal for working on bush meat with the TransGabonais railway and has successfully addressed these issues with Shell in Gamba.
11. Page 52 under improved program management, 5th bullet:” The successful operations from Cameroon FP should be capitalized on and this FP should remain full time. In addition, the Cameroon FP thinks that 3 people in each focal point office is the minimum realistic number. In addition the number of landscapes segments in Cameroon is two, rather than one as mentioned in the report.
12. page 53 under develop a more precise..., first and second point: Again we would like to stress that we need to look at the overall picture and that substantial development funds and expertise have been going into the landscapes from non CARPE sources. A floor and designated window do not seem justified given the fact that development funds are easier to raise than dedicated conservation funds and we risk diluting from our principal objective.
13. Generally for the record we would like to point out that WWF has been active in the Virunga’ s for many years without CARPE funding for now.

Annexes

Even though we were not asked in the form to comment on the annexes we do have a couple of remarks. We should not that given the time restraint we were not able to go through these carefully and by each landscape leader:

Table 7: For Salonga the funding from EU is 813,000 EURO for 3 years (actually 34 months)

Landscape segment and leaders reference sheet contains several errors:

Lisa Steel phone number is 099896151

Salonga: WWF 2nd Column should read: DRC, Salonga Lukenie Sankuru

Page 9: our LS leaders actually work for World Wide Fund For Nature as is the official name of WWF international. The US name is indeed World Wildlife Fund Inc.

The following are additional points raised by the Focal Points in Cameroon and DRC that we transmit here with our submission:

From Cameroon:

To Improve CARPE relationships with national governments CARPE FP should liaise directly with national and local government official who should be a contact person for the FP. This person should be the voice of CARPE Program at the government level.

“Different organizations are responsible for reporting on the cross-cutting components. WRI, and the NGOs responsible for coordinating the work of the CARPE Focal Points submit separate annual reports on their achievement of targets for IR 2 and IR 3 Indicator 2”. In the contrary, according to PMP, it is “CARPE FOCAL POINT who organizes information from CROSS-CUTTER and COUNTRY-HEADS and integrates reporting for this indicator. They will blend reporting from: WRI Institution and Governance Program and GFW IUCN (AWF, CI, WCS, WWF Country Heads)”

“The policy component has not been fully effective in contributing to achievement of IR2, due to the failure of most of the Country Focal Points to coordinate a policy agenda and move it forward.... In other countries the Focal Points made little progress towards convening stakeholders to develop a country policy strategy, identify priority legislative and regulatory reforms, or engage the broader civil society in advocacy or outreach”. It should be clearly clarified that DRC Focal point was not in place for more than a year when the PMP was designed. A new one has been hired since 15 November 2005. The FP office in Brazzaville was not operational.

“However, the USG/USAID responsibilities regarding liaison with host governments are not clearly defined or effective. They have not been carried out aggressively by existing focal points” The realistic approach should be a good coordination with the implementing NGOs

“Administratively locating focal points with Implementing NGOs has not worked well. It leads to the appearance or reality of conflict of interest and makes it difficult for focal points to achieve independence for their tasks of landscape monitoring, coordination with national governments, and policy advocacy”.

This is true only in the case of landscapes monitoring and reporting.

However FP operating within the administrative structure of an implementing NGO seems to be the most realistic and strategic approach and also has some advantages which are not highlighted in the report.

“The assessment team believes that full time focal points may only be needed in DRC, Gabon, and ROC; that a non-NGO administrative home needs to be found; that the present focal point structure of 3 people in each focal point office is excessive..... ”. The Success operations from Cameroon FP should be capitalized in the country and region and this FP should remain full time. In addition 3 people in each focal point office is the minimum realistic number. In addition the number of landscapes segments in Cameroon is two, rather than one as mentioned in the report.

From DRC:

Assessment of Management Structure and Performance

F. The analysis of the roles and effectiveness of Focal points was not thorough and lack accuracy, in some sections.

1. Roles:

The number and importance of Focal points (FP) was not determined by the number of landscape nor by their geographical distribution. FP have a key role in the implication and reinforcement of the civil society. They are also a linchpin for the coordination with the government institutions, donors, international organizations and the embassies. They are very important for the organization of the national working group in charge of the country matrix.

2. Effectiveness: to state that FP were effective only in Cameroon is not correct. The FP in DRC was very effective in CARPE I when she had the responsibilities of Small grant programs only. The FP has been able to build NGOs/CBOs capacity and to promote CARPE. There have not been a DRC FP for almost 2 years.

The report is comparing countries and situations that can not be comparable. The report does not explain clearly why they think it didn't work or it has not been effective but they just limit their analysis comparing situations that can not be compared. DRC situation was quite unique.

The responsibilities of the FP have evolved in CARPE II: therefore the number of staff for the FP should be 3 at minimum.

3. General comments:

The number of FP should be increased to fill the gaps of conservation in the horn of Africa, Rwanda and Burundi.

Administrative location of FP with implementing partners: the report gives only negative aspects of this management structure without taking into consideration some important aspects. The fact that the FP can work closely and administratively within an implementing partner is strategic. During time of conflict and (post-conflict), those implementing NGOs were continuously present in the ground. They were working with ICCN and local NGOs/CBOs. They were visible and active without interruption. The landscape-based programme /approach is such a new and abstract concept that only through implementing NGOs, the FP will be able to effectively meet the targets.

The report tends to give some strong statements a thorough study of the role & responsibilities of the FP.

Recommendation: the report should be reviewed based on these concerns.